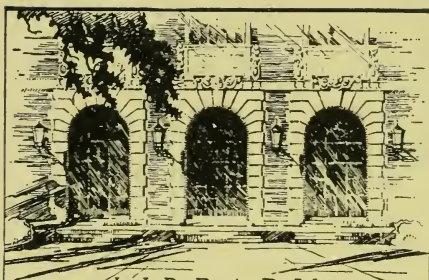






Cosmo Nevill.





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THE
LILY OF PARIS;

OR,

THE KING'S NURSE.

BY

J. PALGRAVE SIMPSON, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF "PICTURES FROM REVOLUTIONARY-PARIS," "LETTERS FROM
THE DANUBE," "GISELLA," ETC.

A perfect woman, nobly plann'd,
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a spirit still, and bright,
With something of an angel light.

WORDSWORTH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1849.



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THE
LILY OF PARIS.

CHAPTER I.

THE ARMOURER'S FORGE.

The vanishing phantoms of love and delight
Abandon my soul like a dream of the night,
And leave but a desert behind.

CAMPBELL.

How now? What news? What hopes and steps discovered?
BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

It was on the morning of the 28th of May, about a fortnight after the day of the students' riot, when Perrinet Leclerc had been wounded at the outbreak of the skirmish. The morning sun again shone brightly over the city of Paris, as if in mockery of the hardships and sufferings that oppressed it. The animating rays of this clear spring-tide sun flickered and danced among

the gently waving leaves of a spreading vine, that hung in embowering mass over the huge vaulted entrance of a small house, which was built in all the picturesque irregularity of the times, with each superior sculptured story overhanging the lower one, until terminated in the high-pointed roof of the gable. The house was situated at the eastern end of the Rue St. Honoré, where that street approaches the Rue de la Feronnerie. Bright, indeed, and graceful was the contrast which the fresh green bower of vine-leaves formed with the dark gaping mouth of the vault that lay open to the street; and refreshing were the gay sunbeams in comparison with the lurid light that flashed now and then, out of the black interior.

Beneath the gaping vault were all the scenic accessories belonging to an armourer's forge; in the background the glowing furnace and the huge bellows; the great anvil placed against the heavy stone pillar, that, in the centre, supported the roof; the blackened vaulted stone arches of the ceiling above; the masses of metal, and unfinished pieces of helmets, cuirasses, halberd-

heads, or swords, lying pellmell upon the elevated stone benches on either side, or on the floor below; the goodly rows of finished weapons hung up against the walls or round the pillars. Two sturdy workmen were hammering, in discordant clatter, upon the anvil; and in the infernal light of the fire in the background stood out the slim boyish form of a diabolical-looking youth, who was mechanically tugging at the chain of the bellows to keep up the flame, his eyes fixed ferociously on the ground, as though his thoughts were employed, in no mild fashion, on far other matter than his occupation; a large lean monkey, that, seated on the edge of the bellows, and holding on stoutly by its forepaws, allowed itself to be balanced up and down, while it grinned upon the youth, as if he were solely thus engaged for the purpose of "giving it a ride," looked like a familiar and favourite imp of the little demon below.

On a stool, near the entrance-opening, sat the master of the forge, the young armourer himself. His head was leant back against the stone pillar of the arch, as if to enjoy the balmy

breath of the spring air without; and the streaks of sun, that found their way through the shade of the vine-leaves, danced merrily upon his half-closed eyelids. His feelings, however, seemed little in accordance with spring-tide or sunbeam; for his brows were sharply knit, and only relaxed to be again more darkly bent, but rather with a spasm of painful thought, than of physical pain; and his face was even paler than was its wont. He sat without his vest; and the open shirt displayed bandages still applied to a recent wound.

“And Yvon comes not,” he said at last aloud, shifting his position uneasily upon his seat.

The quick ear of the youth at the forge caught the sound of the voice immediately; he raised his eyes instantly from their moody dreaming, and, letting fall the chain of the bellows, came forward: the monkey sprang with the rapidity of lightning upon his back, showing its head over one shoulder, as if it were an excrescence belonging to his form.

“The poor youth was here last night, master,” said the boy, with a seeming contempt for

the physical deficiencies of the kloarek, "and appeared wonderfully anxious to see you; but the fever had again been burning in your cheek that afternoon, and you slept peaceably at last. I would not have you disturbed; and I had rather have throttled him with my own hands than let him put a finger on you to awake you."

"Thou didst wrong, Astaroth," replied Perinet, hastily. "The fever in the mind is far more wearing than the fever in the blood: heart's ease is a balm far more precious than the stupid senselessness of sleep. Perhaps he had brought news at last. Oh! I can bear this state of things no longer," he continued, starting up and beginning to pace up and down at the entrance. "Impatience kills as surely as rapier's point: the torment of uncertainty sickens the heart still more than does the loss of blood. Had I not been nailed to my bedstead, like a useless, worn-out, blunted weapon, that can do no service, by that foolish wound, which every child had laughed at as a scratch—but curses on my hot blood! it must be boiling in my veins and racking me with

fever fits ;—had I not lain, no more than a weak puling woman, upon my couch of sickness for this space of time interminable, these long, long days, or months, or years—ay, they might have been years for aught I know—nay, never go to count them, boy !—what matter it to me whether they were years or months, or days, or what their number—they made up an eternity ;—had I not been forced to lie, a very log—and thou too, ungrateful boy, thou too wast one of those who held me down when I had strength to rise, and to be up and doing—go not to tell me the fever-fit was on me—I felt my strength I say ;—had I not been a feeble fool, I had found her long ere now. The force of will can work wonders, they say,” he pursued, talking to himself, rather than addressing the boy : “ and what force of will can equal that of him who loves—loves passionately, as I do ? I had found her—seen her—spoken with her long since. Yvon has a kind, devoted heart ; but all his efforts have as yet been unsuccessful : and what can his poor weak spirit do ?—knows he the lover’s ardour ?—can he feel ? and, feeling not, has he

the *will*? Oh, cursed wound!—cursed the hand that dealt it! She may now be lost to me, and for ever! But I am strong now; and I will be doing once again. Away with all these foolish bandages—these devices of the tardy leech to keep me to my couch! My wound is healed, I say.”

With these words, Perrinet tore away impatiently the linen bandages and rags that were arranged about his wound, in spite of the gripe of Astaroth upon his arm to make him stay his hand. The wound, in truth, although still red and tender, was healed.

“Said I not so?” said the young armourer, triumphantly, as the youth passed his hand over the wound, as one experienced in matters of surgery, and owned that it was in good condition.

“I am strong—I need no further leechcraft. My thick confined blood shall no longer choke my heart with the suffocation of impatience. It shall flow more freely in my veins. I will abroad, seek up again the sorceress, and know, if it be by force, all that she or that other mysterious being may be able to tell. Who shall hinder me?”

"I would not hinder you, my good master," replied Astaroth, with a savage look, "to seek your revenge upon those who have harmed you in any way—for revenge is sweet—be you but strong enough."

"Yes; revenge, if it be needful, also," responded Perrinet; his pale cheek glowing, for an instant, with a passing flush of colour. "My arm is strong, I say, and can revenge my wrongs and her's, ay, and shall too. Fetch me my vest, boy, my cap, my cutlass. I will not linger a moment longer."

"Will you not await the student's coming, master?" inquired the boy.

"Do as I bid thee, and quickly," was Perrinet's only answer.

Astaroth obeyed without a word. Savage as was the nature of the untutored youth, whose wild blood seemed to beat only in his veins more strongly at the thought of vengeance for an injury, it was subdued before the slightest will of Perrinet. There was a power of fascination in the eye, as well as in the bold—and yet, oft-times genial and generous—manner of the young

armourer, that worked its spell upon most of those who approached him more nearly ; and this species of fascination, which enthralled the mild spirit of the gentle and suffering kloarek, was felt even more strongly by the more animal-like nature of the boyish youth, scarcely raised above the condition of the savage, or even the beast. It had been injustice, however, to the wild lad, not to admit that powerful feelings of gratitude to Perrinet, whom he regarded as his saviour and benefactor—instinctive feelings, as strong, perhaps, as those of hatred and revenge within his breast, and arising from the same spontaneous impulses of the savage—formed the greatest part of the motive of that devotion which he had internally sworn to Perrinet. He had told his new master that he would “ follow him to the death : ” and he was ready to make good his word.

When the boy returned with the articles of Perrinet’s dress, he found the young man again thrown back against the entrance arch, his face once more deadly pale. A feeling of faintness had followed the first exercise of his strength in

that ebullition of excitement. The moral struggle had probably produced an ill effect, which mere physical exertion might not have done, in his state of re-convalescence. Astaroth helped his master to put on his vest, and then fetched a cup of water.

“No; wine—wine,” said Perrinet, impatiently. “I need wine.”

The boy again obeyed; and the young armourer drank off the wine that was brought to him with eagerness. His cheek again flushed; he appeared, in truth, to have overcome his feeling of faintness; he rose from his seat, passed his leathern girdle around him, and hung to it his cutlass.

While he was thus engaged, a personage who had once or twice already passed the armourer’s forge, among the crowds that already began to throng along the much-frequented Rue St. Honoré, and who as often had peeped into it askance with curious eyes, now stopped before the vaulted opening. It was a man who appeared to be a member of one of the countless hordes of beggars that infested the capital. His

back was bent, as with the weakness of extreme age ; his hands, although he supported himself upon a stout staff, shook feebly : and his thin legs, although they appeared not to want for muscle, trembled beneath him. A hood of brown serge, the cape of which covered his neck and shoulders, and part of his dress, concealed in a great measure his features, which the bent position of his head rendered but little visible : but, when he raised it to speak, or to look about him for a moment, his white locks, his grizzled beard, which covered the lower part of his face, and his protruding, bushy, grey eyebrows, that hung over his eyes, appeared to indicate his extreme age. His first words to Perrinet told his trade.

“ Charity, Messire, charity, for the love of the Virgin and the saints ! ” he stammered, in the quivering tones of age : and when Perrinet took a small coin from his pouch, and placed it in the beggar’s hand with the remark that what he might have refused to the sturdier mendicant he gave to the aged and infirm, he added, “ Yes, I am aged and feeble now ; and the bright spring sun warms no longer my poor chilly blood. If

you would indeed be kind to the poor old man, let me come in and warm me a bit at yonder fire of your forge. It will do my old blood good; and I heed not the clatter of the workmen, for my poor old ears have lost their hearing—I am deaf, very deaf.” The beggar’s voice trembled, and he coughed sadly.

The young armourer readily assented; and the old man, supporting himself upon his staff, shuffled across to the furnace, sat down upon a stool, and stretched his hands over the dying embers, having previously removed his hood partially from his head. He thus sat, nearly turning his back to the other individuals in the forge. Perrinet, engaged in giving a few instructions to Astaroth after dismissing his workmen to a back part of the establishment, paid no longer any heed to the object of his charity. The youth himself had regarded the little incident with the utmost indifference. It was the ape alone that appeared to be concerned in the affair. Master Zomba, after the fashion of many breeds of dogs, seemed to have a rooted aversion to beggars; for shortly after the

entrance of the old mendicant he had begun to twist himself as if in violent pain, and to screech and chatter fearfully, showing his sharp teeth the while, and to cling more tightly with his long paws about his bearer's neck; and when removed from his gripe somewhat impatiently by Astaroth, and reproved for his indiscreet behaviour, he had flown screaming up a rope to the top of a pillar, where he sat "mopping and mowing" hideously at the beggar, and ever and anon pelting him with little bits of plaster, which he scratched out of the interstices of stone.

Perrinet, meanwhile, had placed his cap upon his head; and he was about to leave the forge, when Yvon entered from the street.

It needed but a glance to see that the kloarek was a prey to some powerful emotion: his bosom heaved also, as though he had walked rapidly; his face was very pale; and there was in his expression that hard plaintive pressure of the brow and mouth which denoted a painful struggle with himself.

"Yvon! you bring me news—you know

where she is?" exclaimed Perinnet eagerly, catching the kloarek's arm. He had but one thought whereby to interpret the agitation of Yvon's physiognomy.

"I have seen her," replied the poor scholar, hanging down his head, as if to avoid the investigating glances of his friend.

"Thou hast seen her!" cried the young lover. "How—when—where? My Odette! my beautiful Odette! I may see her then too—may claim my just rights over her as her affianced husband. Odette may again be mine. Where, where hast thou seen her? Speak, speak, Yvon, thou drivest me wild; speak, I say."

"Yes, I have seen her;" resumed Yvon, as if in spite of himself, hesitating to impart the information that was, perhaps, again to bring his rival into collision with the object of his secret and hopeless adoration.

"Speak out, fellow. Wouldst thou torture me?" exclaimed the impatient Perinnet, grasping his arm more tightly.

The pressure of Yvon's brow and mouth gave way to a rapid convulsive movement, as if of

irritability or vexation, which died away, however, almost as rapidly, and faded into his usual tender look of melancholy. He raised his mild blue eyes, and answered, after a last struggle for composure, "Leave me time to speak, Perinnet, and I will tell thee all."

"Thou art tedious, Yvon," responded the young armourer, letting fall the arm he held, with a frown. "Speak, I say, at once; and tell me first of all, where is she."

"In the Hôtel des Tournelles—in the palace of the king," said Yvon gazing doubtfully upon his friend.

"In the Hôtel des Tournelles!" cried Perrinet, starting with surprise. "But how—how came she there? Ah! It is there young Charles the Dauphin holds his revels; there, under the same roof, where the king his father groans and suffers; there, where he mocks his father's misery with his lewd music, and his lewder mirth; there! she there! and he! Why it was he who stood beneath her window to tinkle up his amorous tunes that fatal day when she was torn from me. You saw him too, Yvon."

It was now Yvon's turn to look aghast. The old beggar also leaned his head upon his hand, and turned it in the direction of the young men; but as he had announced his extreme deafness, it could not be supposed that it was for any purpose of listening to their discourse.

"It was he who courted her as he would court his most willing light-o'-love," continued Perrinet, passionately. "And now, Odette dwells beneath the same roof. Saints of heaven! Odette, so lost, so lost! But no; it cannot be! Force has been used, or diabolical treachery. She was so pure, so good—an angel upon earth. A malediction light upon the dauphin, on the court, on all who tyrannize the land!"

The beggar again moved upon his stool. Yvon uttered a few words to moderate the passion of his friend, and pointed, at the same time, warningly to the stranger; but Perrinet shook his head indignantly.

"Let all the world hear me, if it will," he said; "and that old mendicant's ears hear not what we speak. A malediction light upon them

all, I say. Foul wrong must have been done: but I have an arm to reach the traitor's heart, whoever he may be."

The eyes of Astaroth, who had during this dialogue been engaged in vain endeavours to seduce the agitated monkey from its post of refuge, sparkled with savage joy at these words; and, in imitation of his master, he handled the hilt of a small dagger, with which the liberality of Perrinet had pleased his fancy.

"But you deceive me, Yvon," burst forth Perrinet again; "or you are deceived yourself. This cannot be! Odette in the palace of the king! Some false information has misled you. Tell me so; tell me so; and save me from becoming utterly distracted."

"Myself I saw her," answered Yvon.

"True, true; you said it," continued the excited lover; "with your own eyes you saw her. But how? in what manner? Speak! why do you tell me this, and do not tell me more?"

"Perrinet, I would have told thee already, had thy passion heard me," replied the kloarek.

“But I am calm now, senseless one,” cried Perrinet; “I am calm, I can listen to thee quietly, there.” And he seated himself upon his stool. “The calm of hate’s resolution is in my heart: and be she guilty, I can despise her, cast her forth from my bosom, calmly, calmly, also.” A spasm of rage passed over his face.

“Were all the fiends of hell to tell me she were not the pure spotless lily still, I would not lend an ear to their foul calumny,” exclaimed Yvon, with an energy most unusual to him—his colour flushing up to his forehead indignantly, as if he could challenge even his friend in such a cause. His devoted nature could not harbour the very shadow of a doubt, there where the spirit of the more excitable, more ardent, but more egotistical lover, doubted and trembled.

“Yes, yes; so be it,” said Perrinet, waving his hand impatiently: “but to thy tale, Yvon, to thy tale.”

“Thou hast seen the invention of good Jacquemin Gringonneur,” commenced the scholar, “those painted squares of pasteboard he calls his ‘cards.’”

“I have seen the silly toys in his chamber, I believe,” answered Perrinet; “he would have repeated to me some foolish rhapsody about them—I know not what. But what is this to the purpose, thou tormentor of my patience?”

“Listen,” continued Yvon, with an air of mild reproach; “these toys, as thou callest them, he sought to convey into the hands of our poor maniac king, as a pastime and a solace to him in his better moments. Too weak in health, too timid and mistrustful of himself, he gave them to his daughter Lyonelle, and besought me to accompany her to the palace, in order to endeavour, could we not obtain admission to the presence of the king himself, to confide them to some person who might lay them before him. Jacquemin had entreated me not only to be a protector—a poor one though I be—to his girl, but to explain the emblematic mystery of their signification and import.”

“And thus ye went to the Hôtel des Tournelles,” interrupted Perrinet; “well, well—on with thee!”

“We obtained admittance, but not to the

king, although they said his health was better, his mind much improved within the last few days," pursued Yvon; "but we first saw the king's physician, Messire d'Hersilly, who much approved our good Jacquemin's fancy, for the amusement of monseigneur, the king; and then, at his desire, the Constable, the Count of Armagnac himself,"——

"Curses on him! curses on the Constable! He has been the leading agent in all this wretched business," cried Perrinet, clenching his fists.

The beggar again moved slightly upon his stool; and, from a feeble movement in his shoulders, it might have been imagined that he laughed internally. Yvon continued.

"He received us graciously, and took interest in my explanation of the meaning of the cards. He promised that the king should see the painted figures, and be taught their purport. With this promise we departed to convey the news of the success of our attempt to Lyonelle's father,"——

"But Odette! Odette! thou triflest with

me, Yvon," again interrupted the young armourer.

"Yesterday, in the afternoon," pursued Yvon mildly, although his heart beat more and more violently, as he proceeded in his recital, "we were again sent for by messengers to the Tournelles, to receive the thanks of the king and the reward of Master Jacquemin's labours. We went, and were admitted to see the poor old monarch, Charles. He sat like a holy martyr, with a glory of white hairs around his brow, as the crown of saintly suffering; but he smiled upon us graciously, and spoke us kindly words, like those of a pleased child, and gave Lyonelle, whom he praised for her comely mien—for, sooth she *is* a comely maiden, and a good—a pouch of coin to bestow upon her father as some slight recompense for his pleasant and fanciful invention; regretting the while his own needs and straits, and the hardships of the state—woe to the state, indeed, where such a king can need—that permitted him to bestow no more. But whatever he may have given, and were it nothing, his words alone have rendered Jacquemin happy."

“Odette? Odette?” inquired Perrinet again with impatience: and in truth poor Yvon lingered sadly on his way, like a truant child, turning to the right and to the left, to gather a flower, or catch a butterfly, rather than go straight onwards in his task. What strange feeling was it that rendered his speaking of Odette to the young armourer a cruel effort?

“We had left the royal presence,” resumed the kloarek, “when, as we crossed an anteroom, a door opened, and *she*, she, Lys d’Ange, the Lily of Paris, stood there before me, as the sudden revelation of a spirit of light. My sight seemed dazzled with her brightness, as had the sun suddenly burst from a cloud before my eyes—my brain whirled—for a moment my heart stood still with surprise and beat no more! and then, all at once it beat so furiously that I felt nigh to suffocation. I could not speak—I could not stir from the spot—I believe I knelt, as before a saint in heaven,” and Yvon again shook with agitation.

“Thanks, my kind friend, for all this generous sympathy in my behalf;” said Perrinet, grasping him in an excited manner by one

shoulder; "I feel it truly. But on — on! What said she? what did she? how looked she?"

Yvon had allowed himself to be hurried on by his feelings to give a description of his sensations on being surprised by the apparition of Odette, that he would willingly have retracted, when recalled to himself by the interruption of the young armourer. He coloured deeply at the interpretation given to his agitation by his friend, and for a moment hung down his head.

"On, on," cried Perrinet, again. "What more? Tell me of her every gesture?"

"What should I tell?" responded Yvon, confusedly. "It seemed to me it was a vision that I saw; and when the dream is past, can we remember clearly what happened in that dream? And yet it was no unreal vision; it was a living breathing reality. She advanced; she smiled upon us as she passed. I believe she spoke words to us; for her lips moved; and I heard a sound as that of music, that vibrated upon my heart; but I know not what she said, for it was my soul heard her, not my ears. When Lyonelle recalled me to myself from my trance of

wonder, a door had closed upon her—she was gone. I tell thee I know no more. I know not what I did myself—'twas foolish—yes, folly 'twas, I know; for Lyonelle, so good, so kind, so sisterly to me always, chid me for a fool to stand gazing thus upon a passing vision of fair hair and eyes of blue, and rudely pinched my arm; and, when I staggered from the palace, still full of wonder and surprise, thinking I know not what—for my brain still whirled—she answered not the questions that I asked, as thou askest of me now. When I sought to know what the bright vision had spoken, she told me she knew not, it mattered not to her: her voice seemed choked; and, when we reached our house, her eyes seemed wet with the moisture of tears. Strange that the bright being should exercise an influence so powerful even on the thoughtless Lyonelle! And yet, why strange? Who should look upon an angel and not be moved?" And Yvon, with glowing cheek, again hung his head, and sighed deeply and convulsively.

"You did not speak to her of me?" now broke in Perrinet, who had listened with every

mark of impatience to all the latter part of Yvon's confused tale. "You did not seize the opportunity to mention my name? You did not ask whether she had no message—no appeal—no word? Oh, Yvon! thou art no true friend that couldst let such an occasion pass. Not a word—not a thought of me? Foolish, indeed, thou wast, most foolish; ay, and most unkind. She had bid me come—she had begged assistance of me from her enemies, hadst thou but spoken of me; she had found means to see me. Yvon, Yvon, this was no friendly act."

The kloarek hung down his head, and answered at first not a word to his friend's reproof, while Perrinet paced up and down in a tumult of newly awakened emotions and plans of action.

"I came at once to seek thee," he said at last mildly, "and tell thee what I had seen, but thou wast lying in a refreshing sleep; and they would not let me have speech of thee. I remained long, but thou continuedst still to sleep on. This morning I hurried hither——" He stopped seeing that Perrinet paid no heed to his explanation.

"But now I know her whereabouts," ex-

claimed the young armourer, at last; "come what may, I will see her, speak with her, and know the worst, whatever it may be. No guards, no palace walls shall hinder me—they shall not keep from me Odette. And, be she in the power of that young princely libertine, no power on earth shall restrain my just revenge; no, nor prince himself, all heir to the throne of France though he may be, nor king, nor Constable. I will find access to the palace of the Tournelles—I will fight my way through them all, dagger in hand, if they should oppose my progress. Let them kill me if they will, for I am reckless now. Yes, Yvon, thou wast right; there is no venomous serpent whose bite gnaws the heart more fearfully than does the cruel gripe of jealousy! yes, boy, the poison is in the blood, and boils, and seethes, and tortures. But, even if they strike me dead, I will not be unavenged."

Perrinet again staggered, overcome by the violence of his feelings, in his still harassing state of weakness; and, clasping his hands before his eyes, as though a mist were on them, he sat down thus for a moment.

“Charles, the dauphin! Charles, the dauphin!” he muttered lowly between his teeth, “woe betide thee!”

The kloarek, who had gazed upon the young lover with anxiety and embarrassment during this ebullition of angry feeling, now approached him, and murmured words of patience, calm forbearance, moderation, in his ear; but Perinet heeded him not, or only shook his head without looking up. It was only when the boy Astaroth crept to his other side, like a young serpent, and offered his services to aid him in any project of vengeance he might conceive, that he nodded his head silently, as if in acquiescence. The good and evil spirits were again at work, in bodily form, about his soul; but the good was now utterly disregarded; the evil seemed as if about to gain the complete mastery: the good flinched back with pain; the evil wore an air of triumph. The cheek of Yvon, the poor, devoted, rightly-minded kloarek, was pale; the eyes of Astaroth, the wild boy, who knew nor God nor devil, nor the principles of right or wrong, much less those of self-restraint, glared with a look of savage delight.

The deaf beggar, meanwhile, seemed to have found sufficient warmth to his old blood from the embers of the forge ; for he raised himself from his seat and prepared to depart.

“ Thanks, my good host,” he said, tottering up to Perrinet, and leaning upon his staff ; “ the effect I sought I have obtained to my very heart’s content ; I shall not forget it—I shall not forget it, trust me, old as I am ; I never forget, never.” The old mendicant laughed with a cracked laugh that might almost have been construed as ironical. “ And one good turn deserves another ; and, may be, poor as I am, you may live to find out that. The Virgin and all the saints be with you, Messire ! You seem to be ailing or unhappy. Well, well, may you quickly meet with your true deserts.” And the old man chuckled with a laugh which was soon swallowed up in a wheeze and a cough, painful to hear.

“ It is well—it is well, good fellow,” said Perrinet, rising impatiently, and waving him away.

“ I cannot hear what you say, you know ; I am very deaf,” quavered the old beggar ; “ but doubtless your words were kind.”

“I will be off to the Hôtel des Tournelles, without delay,” exclaimed Perrinet, unheeding him. “See her I will ; and when I know my fate, avenge my wrongs on the heads of the guilty. Astaroth, thou canst aid me, perhaps. Follow me, boy.”

“To the death, master,” replied the youth boldly and cheerfully.

The monkey, that had slowly descended from its place of refuge, when the beggar left his seat, now sprang upon his bearer’s back, and again showed his teeth from thence at the old mendicant.

“Peace, Zomba,” said the boy ; “thou shalt not be left behind. Thou knowest a trick or two that may stand me in good stead. And should we come across Master Cleofas, the mediciner of his mightiness the Emperor of Kathay, we will not fear him. We have a bold master to defend us now, and a dagger to reach his tyrannical heart, if he dare lay hand upon us. Come !”

The beggar was passing the monkey-bearer as he spoke ; and, although he raised his head but

slightly, he glared at the boy, with such a deadly look, out of two sharp black eyes that glistened from among the overhanging grizzled eyebrows, on either side of a sharp eagle nose, that Astaroth, who turned at the moment, started and stood like one thunderstruck. Zomba screeched and trembled upon his back.

The old mendicant had already emerged from the vaulted arch and mingled with the crowd in the street, before the boy had recovered from the effect of the glance of those eyes. But all at once Astaroth gave a subdued scream, and, clutching his little dagger, darted after him.

Perrinet called in vain: the boy had disappeared.

“What does that mean?” said the young armourer angrily; “at the moment I need his services, the young rascal runs off, I know not why or whither.”

“The saints know I pity the poor youth; and I own that thy kindness to him is like thy generous self,” said Yvon thoughtfully: “but dost thou right to trust him over much? There are times I look upon him with a dread

incomprehensible to myself, as though he were no earthly being : and he talks more like an accursed pagan sometimes than a good Christian. If I wrong him, Heaven forgive me ; and he did thee good service in thy sickness from thy wound."

Perrinet, after a few words with Yvon upon this subject, and some directions how to act in his behalf, was about to leave the house alone, when Astaroth returned. His face was pale ; and his eyes wore a mixed expression of hatred and fear.

"You are lost, master," he said, in breathless tone, to Perrinet ; "it was my old master himself, that seeming beggar. He has been juggler, holy relic-vendor, rope-dancer, all things in all lands : he can assume all shapes ; his quack doctorship is only one of them. The villain spy, I knew him not, like a fool, although Zomba smelled him out at once. But his devil's eyes betrayed him at last. He has heard all you said : and he, who has the malice of a demon, and hates you, will be sure to do you some harm. Oh ! you are lost. I had stabbed

him in the street to stop his mouth ; but I lost sight of him, and he escaped me. Forgive me, master—forgive me if you can.”

The boy’s consternation had some effect upon Perrinet : he looked thoughtful for a time.

“Thou art a faithful fellow, Astaroth,” he said at last. “I could not, if I would, delay my purpose of seeking out Odette. To the Hôtel des Tournelles, no less. And him I fear not : my heart is bold in my just cause.”

“Oh, then, my Perrinet, be just and true to thyself in all thou art about to do,” said his good genius, Yvon.

“The best justice is revenge,” muttered his evil spirit, Astaroth.

CHAPTER II.

THE FIRST GAME OF CARDS.

In spite of all
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits.

KEATS.

My words shall be as spotless as my youth,
Full of simplicity and naked truth.

MARLOW.

THE king slumbered in his great arm-chair. His nights were still restless; and his sleep was still uncertain in its hours: but the change that had been wrought within the last two weeks in his unhappy state had been as salutary as it had been great; and his bettered health and stronger reason seemed about to acquire a permanency, which had not been the unhappy monarch's lot during so many long years since the unlucky accident that led to his second period of madness: although both health and reason had been occasionally restored during rare and fleet-

ing intervals. Master Guillaume d'Hersilly had declared that there was every prospect of a complete restoration of the monarch's mind, by means of the soothing system he had now adopted; he congratulated himself triumphantly upon the success of his scheme, which had far surpassed his utmost hopes: the fair being whom he had appointed as the king's nurse, had worked a cure, he said, that he looked upon almost as a miracle, in which the pure enthusiastic girl must have been aided and supported by the heavenly powers: and, to have made this concession, the mind of the dry and sceptical physician must have been powerfully impressed by the fascinating influence of Odette.

Charles had wandered forth at early dawn into the gardens of the palace, to enjoy the morning air, accompanied by her he now termed his guardian angel. Slightly fatigued, although the day was still young, he slumbered peacefully. Far different was his appearance from that he wore when Odette first stood, like a trembling victim, before him in his chamber. There was a clearer, if not a brighter tint upon

his pale, withered cheek, that had now lost its ashy colour. His hair no longer hung in clotted masses down his cheeks, but was combed smooth with care ; his grizzled beard was trimmed : his long loose gown, although only of plain black velvet, and no longer fresh with its first lustre, was clean and unrent ; and, although there was nothing in his attire that could have distinguished him from one of the better citizens of Paris, there was now again a majesty and dignity, even in his sleeping form, that might have told that it was no common man who slumbered there.

The king slept peacefully. His respiration was easy and equal ; and, although his lips moved now and then, and he uttered broken words in his sleep, yet the words were accompanied by a smile that illumined his whole face—a smile of peace and heart's content. The absence of all fire among the ashes of the huge hearth showed also that his fearful fits of ague had passed away. The appearance of the apartment too, although far removed from the pomp or state of a royal chamber, was changed to an aspect of order

and care. By the side of the sleeping monarch was a table, upon which, amidst some parchments that seemed to give evidence of his having already occupied himself in affairs of state, lay a heap of those pasteboard squares illuminated with figures, which Master Jacquemin Gringonneur, their inventor, had denominated "cards,"—in that age of a size and consistency which would alarm many of those delicate hands that are accustomed to handle his invention in modern days.

At a further end of the apartment, near a half-open door, stood Odette, pure, noble, serene as ever. Her eyes were fixed invariably upon the sleeping king, although, with one finger raised aloft, as if to impress the necessity of speaking in a low tone of voice, she was listening to the unctious words of the little Carmelite monk, Jean Petit, whose eyes sparkled with eagerness, and whose hand was waved energetically in the demonstrations he was making to the fair guardian of the monarch of the realm.

Master Jean Petit had lost no opportunity, whenever, taking advantage of the confidence of

the Constable, he had had access to the palace, to instil into Odette's mind those insinuations intended to produce a result to the advantage of his patron, the Duke of Burgundy, which had formed his leading motive for aiding in the introduction of the simple girl to the palace, and which he had commenced upon the first day of her establishment near the person of the king. He had found again an opportunity, during the silence of the king's chamber, when no ears were near to hear him, to endeavour to complete the task of instruction he had so artfully begun: and he had been trying to impress more boldly and powerfully than ever upon her mind the necessity of awakening the king's returning intellect to the political truth, that in the aid of the Duke of Burgundy alone was to be sought the salvation and welfare of the country; calling her attention at the same time to the fact that this influence must be secretly and warily instilled. That the pure and simple mind of Odette had been worked upon by the artful insinuations of the monk was evident by the look of noble enthusiasm which pervaded

her face ; but to what extent, or how entirely in the direction he desired, the straightforward candour of the simple-minded girl baffled him to know. She responded with ardour to all his appeals to her to awaken the energies of the king in the cause of his country, listened with devotion, but with humility, to his assurances that the Almighty had chosen her among women, and to her eternal glory and renown, for this great and holy task, and promised implicit obedience to his will. The monk, however, did not feel inwardly fully satisfied with the progress he had made upon the mind of his pupil. There seemed to be a power in her very simplicity that might prove a match for all his art.

“It is now thou alone, my daughter, that canst lead Charles our king to obey thy will,” pursued the monk, insinuatingly. “To thee alone he listens. Thou art become his *reason* ; in thee alone, then, as the reason of the monarch, reposes the welfare of the state. That reason must be employed to indicate the truth : and I have told thee where, and where alone, the truth is to be found.”

“Father, I am but a poor weak, humble girl,” replied Odette; “but you assure me that the holy work is placed within my hands by the Divine will. God grant me force, then, to accomplish that holy work. And although I shall soon have passed away, and my very name shall be forgotten, my own consciousness that, as the instrument of a mightier power, I have contributed my poor zeal only to the welfare of our unhappy France, and not for glory and renown, will render me proud and happy. Oh! may heaven save my country, as it has pleased it to restore my king!”

The monk frowned, and bit his lip.

“But the will of heaven is not sufficient on this corrupt earth,” he said, “without the aid of human means. I have explained to thee how these human means may be best applied. This, too, the king must know; and every word that falls from his mouth it is thy duty to repeat to me, as thy adviser and confessor. It is thy duty.”

“Father, I will do my duty,” replied Odette.

“Thou knowest the path traced by heavenly finger before thee.”

“For the weal of king and country,” said Odette, firmly.

The monk would have said more to change somewhat the simplicity of her replies, that left out of sight entirely the principal object of all his instructions; but at the same moment, Odette placed her finger upon her lip to bid him be silent, and then waved him away.

“He moves—he wakes”—she said in a whisper. “He does not like to see strangers near him when first he opes his eyes. Spite of his restored strength it gives him sometimes a start of terror. Leave us, my father, I entreat you.”

The monk obeyed. He again lifted up his hand warningly to Odette, and then left the apartment.

With noiseless step the light figure of Odette glided over the floor to the king’s side. Charles looked around him, at first, with an air of puzzled wonder, as if not aware of the place in which he was; but when his eyes fell upon the angelic form of Odette, as she approached, a smile of joy and peace overspread his whole physiognomy.

“Odette! Odette! he murmured lowly. “It is thou, my child.”

“I am here, my lord, to serve you,” she said.

“Yes, thou art ever there, my child; my good, pure, beauteous child,” resumed the king, looking upon her with an expression of the fondest paternal admiration. “Thou art never tired of thy attendance upon a poor restless, cross-grained, half-witted old man. Oh! tell me—tell me, Odette—thou wilt not quit me? never—never—even though they say I need thy care no more?”

“Never!” said Odette, although with embarrassment. “My first, most sacred duty, is to await my king’s pleasure. As long as his handmaiden can serve him, and find favour in his eyes, she will never quit him.”

“Thy duty—yes!” resumed the king, sadly, “thy king’s commands! I would, indeed, thou couldst never quit me; for thou art the guardian angel of my reason; it is the magic of thy beaming smile has chased from me the dark forms that grinned around me; thou hast rendered my days tranquil, my nights, nights of

repose, and not of torment: I have become accustomed now—a sweet and soothing custom—to see thee when I close my eyes in sleep—to see thee when again I ope them—to see thee even in my dreams: but no—command I cannot. Were it to thyself a pleasure to remain; couldst thou find here heart's ease and peace by my side; could I think thee happy here, Odette, then would I command as king; but not so—not so.”

“Oh! speak not thus, my sovereign lord;” replied Odette. “I will never quit you, while you will it otherwise.”

“But canst thou be happy with the poor old man, Odette?” said the good king, kindly and earnestly.

The maiden appeared troubled; she bent her head, and pressed her hands tightly across her bosom, without speaking, as if some embarrassing and almost painful thought had crossed her.

“Ah! I see it;” resumed Charles, sadly, throwing himself back in his chair. “This dark house of mourning is a prison to thee, my poor child; the care thou bestowest on me is the

care of pity. Thy heart is far away. Thou hast friends elsewhere—those thou lovest—thy lover, perhaps. Odette, I will be no egotist king. Thou shalt not call me tyrant.”

“There is one who looks upon me as his affianced bride;” replied Odette, looking up calmly and without embarrassment. “I love him as a brother—true: but think not, my lord, I pine for his love.”

“Oh! I have already robbed thee of too many days of a bright and happy life of girlhood,” pursued Charles; “I must no longer darken thy path of life with my sad shadow. I have torn sufficient flowers of joyousness from thy brow to wither them in my destroying hands; I must not condemn thee to seclusion by my side. Life, love, pleasure call thee. Go.”

“Think not thus, my king,” said the embarrassed maiden. “My dreams are not of love or joy. I would not quit you. But—but—” she stopped, and hung down her head.

“If thou goest, sweet child, my daughter, my Odette,” resumed the king, mournfully, “thou wilt take with thee thy monarch’s

deepest gratitude. I owe thee all, since I owe thee my reason; and my reason is my power; my empire; the welfare of my state. But if with thee again should go that reason—shouldst thou depart, and leave me poor and powerless as thou hast found me—and the very thought of losing thee troubles again my brain—I should die, Odette.” And he covered his face with his hands.

“My lord! my lord! can I serve you, I will quit you never!” replied the poor girl, much moved; and she knelt at his feet.

“Thou canst remain with joy?” asked Charles, again looking up.

“With the grateful feeling of the deepest attachment and reverence to my king;” answered Odette, enthusiastically.

The king bent over her and kissed her on her pure white forehead.

“An old man’s blessing rest on thee, my child,” he said. “Look thee, I am very unhappy,” he continued after a pause of emotion; “Sit thee down, my daughter, and listen—I have many cares, which thy bright presence lessens and thy

simple counsels ease," he pursued, pointing to a footstool, on which Odette seated herself at his feet. The king took both her hands, and clasped them over his knees; Odette looked up earnestly in his face. "They say the hearts of kings are in God's keeping. It has pleased Him to wring mine sadly—to wring it perhaps more cruelly still, now that reason returns, than in the wretched sufferings of utter madness. Oblivion in misery may be better sometimes, methinks, than consciousness to more real evils. But, God forgive me—I will not dispute His will. The miserable state of my unhappy country presses sorely on my heart: and what can a poor powerless, penniless king do to alleviate its sufferings?" Charles bent his head with a feeling of despair.

"Rouse you, my lord," said Odette firmly; gather all your energies—all your wisdom. Give not way thus to feelings of despair. God will never desert them who seek his aid: such belief was ever taught me; and such belief I ever will retain. I am your nurse, my king; and with God's help, if He really inspire me, I

will be your counsellor also. Pardon the poor girl that she should have such a thought. But it is a humble instrument, they say, which the saints sometimes inspire to work His will!"

"My good Odette," said the king kindly, "thou speakest truly: but thou knowest not all the distracted turmoil of the state. Between them they tear my fair land to tatters. It was once a rich and noble robe to deck a king: they have rent it into filthy rags, that it shames a king to look upon."

"With courage, firmness, resolution, and a good trust in the aid of our Holy Mother, all these evils may be amended," said the enthusiastic girl.

"The English have landed in Normandy, they tell me," pursued Charles faintly, "harass the land, and claim my very crown. Ah! that crown! how heavily it weighs upon my weary brow! Willingly would I lay it down, and die—a poor forgotten beggar. But crowns are not placed by Divine hand upon the heads of kings to be cast down, at will, as useless or offensive baubles. A people may not be thrown

away and bartered like the senseless toys of childhood. A son's rights may not be trampled underfoot at will. And yet my Charles, my son, my pretty boy, the last remains of my goodly ones—all dead—all dead—he who should be the consolation, the support, the pride of my old age—does he deserve or can he wield that crown, that I would shed my life's blood to preserve for him?"

Odette cast down her eyes for a time: but, as the king paused as if expecting an answer, it was to the first of his words that she replied.

"Sire! there are still bold hearts in France to resist the invading English: you have been yourself a brave and valiant warrior. Put yourself at the head of your vassals once more, unfurl the *oriflamme*, cry 'God and St. Denis to the rescue!' and you will see how many thousands will follow you to the battle and the victory."

The king pointed sorrowfully to his grey hairs, and stretched forth his pale hands, thinned with suffering so as to be almost transparent. He smiled bitterly, but said not a word.

“ But choose, then, a gallant chief, my king, who can command your armies as your councils,” resumed Odette.

“ The Constable says that my enemies are too powerful, and that the revenues of the state are exhausted,” said Charles sadly. “ My people suffer and murmur ; and I cannot find the heart to impose new burdens on them. It would be as the blow of a dagger in my heart to think they called me tyrant.”

“ Seek aid in the noblest and boldest of the land ; they will not fail their king in his sad needs.”

“ In whom ? in whom ? ” cried the king despairingly : “ they desert or betray me one and all.”

A rustling behind the tapestry hangings of the door by which the monk had left the chamber might have been heard, had not the king and his fair guardian been so completely occupied in the earnestness of a discourse, in which the sickly monarch, barely restored to reason, and the simple-minded girl, were discussing the most important interests of a great country ; and on the issue of which depended perhaps

its future destinies. The hangings were even partly raised, as if the person, who was concealed behind, bent forwards to listen better to the answer about to follow the question of the king.

“ In those whose hearts beat most truly for the good of our unhappy France; in those, who have its best interests at heart; in those whose good arm can defend and save.” Odette hesitated for a moment, seemed about to name some one; then, as if changing her mind, added carelessly, “ the Duke of Burgundy.”

“ Name him not ! ” exclaimed Charles in an excited manner : “ Did he not, the arch traitor, assassinate my beloved brother, Louis of Orleans ? Trust in him—never—never ! Even now, with rebel force, they tell me, and as disloyal subject, he advances against his liege lord and king. They add, that Abbeville, Amiens, Montdidier, Beauvais, some of my fairest and best towns, are in his power. Burgundy ! Burgundy ! he would rob my last remaining son of his last heritage.”

“ If he be a traitor, let him be as a traitor

scorned," said Odette, indignantly ; " I have been misled, as others doubtless were misled, as to his true deserts."

The hangings of the door were let fall, and a low exclamation, like the grunt of a beast foiled of its prey, might have been heard behind them.

" No ; for the good of your crown, your state, your people, I will lift my voice," continued the maid, with animation ; " but never to urge you to take him you regard as a traitor and assassin to your councils."

" Odette, Odette," resumed the king, " I have two enemies to combat, instead of one ; and the combat of my own mind for my people's welfare—not knowing what path to take—is the fiercest, most cruel war of all. My children, my poor children of France, which way can I turn to do you good ?—which way to remedy your manifold evils ? For them I must first think, and labour—and how hardly labour ! Order must be restored to our ruined finances ; means must be taken to cover the spoliations of one, who should have been destined to be the pride of France, and who has been its shame." The king again

covered his face with his hands, and fell back in his chair. Odette looked on him anxiously.

“Isabel, Isabel,” murmured Charles, lowly—
“my beautiful, my once beloved, once loving Isabel, into what a gulf of misery and evil hast thou plunged thy country, thy unhappy husband, ay, and thyself! Thy country ruined by thy prodigality and selfish luxury, thy treasures lavished on thy minions, thy husband deserted and betrayed—ah, how betrayed!—thy loving, loving husband!—thyself a by-word and a scoff. Base queen!—false wife!—bad mother! First thou hast corrupted my only boy by the example of thy follies; then thou hast hated him, with unnatural hate, because he supported thee not in thy evil deeds. And Charles—Charles—my boy—the heir to my crown—the dauphin of France—he, too, follows the track a bad mother showed him, and, instead of listening to the counsels of good advisers, and drawing the sword in defence of his country, fritters away his youth in the pursuit of follies and debaucheries!”

“Believe him not so base,” said Odette,

trembling, and again casting down her eyes, although the king did not look upon her; "take comfort in the thought that he may change, and become a blessing to his father—his king—his country."

"Oh!—I am most unhappy," repeated the king, unheeding her, "the most unhappy man of all my realm. There be those who suffer—but they have wife, or friends, or children. But I have none—they are all gone—lost—dead; and I am a lone, a miserable old man."

Odette looked at him with a spasm of agony; she thought, for a moment, that his senses were again deserting him.

"Drive these sad thoughts from you, king," she exclaimed; "the sun shall yet pierce the dark clouds and shine upon your fortunes once again."

"No sun—no sun—all darkness!" murmured the king, without looking up.

Odette rose with a feeling of despair in her heart. Her eyes fell upon the cards lying on the table, and a thought crossed her.

"Let not the dark spirit come across your

brain, my lord the king," she said, leaning over his chair, and murmuring softly in his ear; "chase it away. It is I who speak—I, Odette, your nurse, your guardian. Nay, I will be obeyed!" and she removed his hands gently from his face. "You must not think now, it is forbidden. To divert your mind, see here is the game invented by Master Jacquemin Gringonneur. You took much pleasure in its devices yesterday—let us play again. Nay, I will not be gainsayed. I, your subject, order you, my king, to play with me; and *my* power is despotic. I must and will be obeyed. Come!"

The king smiled mournfully—then laughed more cheerfully—then shook his head and took up the cards.

"Thou canst work thy will with me in all things," he said; "and, in truth, it is a pleasant pastime."

"Come! let us to our battle," exclaimed Odette, cheerfully, kneeling on her footstool at the opposite corner of the table to the king; "I will be your adversary—in play, mind me!—for I love you too well to be your enemy, even in

name. To our battle-field! Let us see, king, whether fortune will not smile upon you. Your success shall be a good augury to the fortunes of the realm."

Thus saying, the fair maiden took the cards from the hands of the king, and separating the black from the red, divided the packet into two equal parts.

"The red shall be your soldiers, my lord," she said, handing him his portion; "the black shall be mine, and your enemies. Look you that you beat me well, and take all my army—kings, generals, soldiers—all, all prisoners."

"Come, my brave men," exclaimed Charles with animation, and the pleasure of a child; "come, let us do our duty. Cæsar I have, and Charlemagne; and Renaud, too, and Hector—bold captains, both. I shall beat thee, my poor Odette. To arms! to arms! Down on the English and the Burgundians. The English and the Burgundians are the black traitors. Mine are the men of France, with blood red courage on their face. To arms! to arms! Cut them in pieces!—take them prisoners!—

Sus, sus, upon the black!" The eyes of the poor old king sparkled, and his cheek was flushed, as if he were about to engage in a real battle with the invaders of his country.

"Beat me! beat me!" said Odette, laughing.
"I wish no better issue."

"Battle!" cried Charles.

"Battle!" echoed Odette.

The opposing parties set to work upon their painted combat with the energy of children, who act themselves into a belief in the reality of their sports. Odette had placed a deeper meaning and a deeper purpose on the issue of the game, and trembled lest she should win. The poor old king gave in to the ardour of the imaginary struggle, as if the destinies of the kingdom of France really depended upon his victory or defeat at cards.

There can be little doubt, as well from the expressions used in ancient records, as by the name of "battle" bestowed upon it, that the first game of cards, arranged to please the maniac monarch, Charles VI. resembled that still played by children, called, "Beggar my

Neighbour." Each figure that was turned up on the board, was entitled to receive surrender of so many cards from the adversary, according to its rank and value, the ace, however, predominating above the figures in the number it took: another figure intervening during the surrender put in its claim and turned the fortune of the day: the numbered cards, or common soldiers, were delivered over as prisoners, but exercised no further influence on the "battle:" the player, who in the various turns of fortune, at last got all the cards within his hands, had gained the fight.

For some time the fate of war appeared undecided. Sometimes the king uttered exclamations of despair, as the ranks of the English appeared to increase in bulk, and his own army diminish: sometimes he shouted with joy as a figure in his own hand, receiving full surrender of prisoners, carried off a heap of troops, that had long disputed the victory with various fortunes. "Battle! battle!" cried both the players as they threw down a powerful card. At last, at a moment when by chance almost all the

cards of value lay in a heap upon the table, Odette in the payment of her prisoners threw down a queen.

“ Dame of hearts ! ” she cried.

“ Ah ! I am afraid,” said Charles pausing : “ that is Isabel the Queen. In my fancy I have named it so. And she has gone over to the English and Burgundian side. She is about to carry off all—all—and leave me a desolate and dishonoured knight.”

“ My prisoners—give them here—play—there is still hope for you,” said Odette, although she trembled lest she should succeed.

“ I dare not,” replied the king.

“ Courage ! ” resumed Odette.

A card fell from the king’s hand : it was a common one.

“ Lost—lost,” he said sighing.

“ Not yet. Another prisoner for my dame. Let us see ! what will it be ? Courage—forwards.”

The king turned another card, but without daring to look at it.

“ Charlemagne ! ” exclaimed Odette.

“Charlemagne!” cried the king, with the joy of a child. “Now pay—pay—my prisoners—quick—down with the black English!”

Odette paid her surrendered soldiers without the intervention of another figure. The king took up the disputed heap. In a few minutes with the powerful allies he had taken in his hand, he had won.

“Victory! I have vanquished them!” cried Charles.

“Victory!” shouted Odette also. “My king will conquer all his enemies, let him but have courage and good heart.”

Charles bent his head thoughtfully: but he smiled as if he accepted the augury in spite of himself: and it was with a gesture of impatience that he heard the noise of footsteps in the ante-chamber. It was with a movement of vexation also that he saw the Constable enter: but, quickly subduing this childish feeling, he resumed the air of majesty that was so completely his own. Odette rose and stood behind his chair.

“Welcome, my cousin,” said the king. “What news bring you thus suddenly and unannounced?”

Your brow is dark. What evil intelligence have you to communicate? Has Rouen fallen?"

"No, Sire," replied the Constable; "the brave citizens of Rouen still hold out against the English king, although sore beset by sickness and famine. Would we could do more to aid them in their loyal efforts; but our means grow daily scantier; our best troops are forced to be concentrated around the capital, in order to defend it against the rebel Burgundians, who still advance more boldly, encouraged, pardon me, Sire, by the presence of the queen among them; and in spite of all our efforts small detachments of their troops are supposed to be concealed, even in the immediate vicinity of Paris. Money and means must be found to strengthen our resources. I crave, then, from your royal hands the signature of a new ordinance for the raising of an impost upon the capital; and having heard that my king was waking, I have ventured to approach him to that intent."

"It is well, my cousin; but as concerns this ordinance it must not be," replied the king;

“my poor people are already crushed to the earth by the weight of their burdens. How will you find bold hearts to defend us, if those hearts be only taught to curse us in their bitterness? Can you not drive these fellows off with such force as you possess? shall my Constable tell me that he cannot—dare not?”

“Sire,” resumed Armagnac, “I am the chosen and devoted defender of your royal state, as you well know, and as I will prove in time and place, with the aid of Saint Bernard and my good sword; but alone, and without means, the most zealous, the most valiant must give way. And Paris is our only hope: most of the other towns, instigated by Burgundy and the queen, refuse to pay our taxes, and we have not the power to enforce them.”

“Our people of Paris shall be no longer harassed, we say,” exclaimed Charles with unwonten energy; “let our own private treasure be disposed of.” Armagnac shook his head. “Alas! remember we well now. You are right, cousin; even the golden cup from which I drank has been disposed of to meet the needs of my own

household. But let our royal Hôtel of St. Paul be placed in pawn—the treasures of the palace of the Louvre—its costly and wondrous library; with God's help, cousin, we will still find means to meet our first exigencies; and then, with the aid of St. Denis of France, we will trust in the boldness of our hearts and the justice of our cause, to chase these English from the land. True, I have caused the unbelieving Jews to be all exiled from our city of Paris, as an expiation to Heaven for the sins of its rulers; and in mercy I have allowed them to take their wealth away with them; but we shall find men of substance still in our good city, who will take the pledge of our royal palaces, and accept the promise of our royal word, to supply our funds. Let this be done. Where is my provost? let him come."

"Messire Juvenal des Ursins already waits without," replied the Constable.

"I would see him—speak with him on these financial matters," said the king.

Orders were given to that effect. Meanwhile the monarch looked for encouragement to

Odette, who, having retired to the recess of the window with humility, in order not to intrude her presence upon the Constable in matters of business of state, stood with her arms crossed over her bosom, with that attitude which was so habitual to her, and with her eyes fixed upon the king. She smiled, and nodded her head approvingly; and the eyes of Charles glistened with pleasure.

“Another ordinance, for which I request the royal signature of my king,” resumed the Constable, placing a parchment on the table, “is to the effect that the University privileges be suspended, in order that search be made, in spite of right of immunity or asylum, for the ringleaders of a riotous band of students, who opposed, beat, and murdered several of the city guard and of my troops, now some fourteen days gone. As yet all search has been in vain; and the University dares to grumble and resist. But justice wills, and policy demands, that they meet their deserts as rebellious traitors. By such means alone can we hope to keep down the spirit of insurrection. Sire, the cry of ‘Long

live Burgundy!’ was raised by the rebel fellows.”

“No! take it hence,” said Charles firmly, consulting the while his fair guardian with his eyes; “the hot-headed, foolish boys knew not what they cried. Policy demands that we forgive and forget, my cousin, not shed fresh blood, and stretch anew the rack. No, no, I say. Policy demands that we conciliate the university, not drive it into open opposition.”

“But there is no doubt, Sire, that a Burgundian faction exists within our very walls,” resumed the Constable, “that it is fostered in that nest of traitors; that”——

“Tell them their king will do justice to all their demands,” interrupted Charles; “tell them that he loves them well; and that, now it has pleased Heaven to restore his health, he will receive them face to face, hear all their grievances, and amend the wrong. Trust me, cousin, they will no longer cry then, ‘Long live Burgundy;’ perhaps not even ‘Long live Armagnac!’ but you will not heed that, cousin, when the welfare of the state is alone at stake—but

they will cry 'Long live France!' and the cry will respond to every heart."

Armagnac, in obedience to a wave of the hand from the king, took up the ordinance; but he frowned angrily, and he nodded his head too with an air of resolution, as if determined to work his will against the suspected rebels, spite of want of ordinance or kingly word: and when Charles once more looked across to Odette, who again smiled on him approvingly, he scowled for the first time upon the fair girl, as if he had begun to hate her for being the cause of the restoration of the monarch to that state of reason which now thwarted his designs.

A formal and pedantic-looking individual, dressed in dark and severe, but rich attire, now entered the chamber.

"Ah! my good Juvenal! my brave Provost! the able chronicler of our times, welcome to our presence;" said Charles. "Alas! thou hast but sad times, and cruel events to chronicle with thy fluent pen, my Juvenal, in these our days; but we will see whether we cannot, with God's blessing, give thee happier events and more

grateful subject for thy history. But for the present we must lose no time; we have much business before us, and we must do our work well. Come, Juvenal, we have to lay our heads together for the good of our beloved citizens of Paris; and you tell me that they love not ill their poor old king?"

"Sire," said Juvenal des Ursins, the Provost, who had been bowing stiffly and profoundly during the king's address, "your people look upon you as their father—and, like children, love you. I come to bear the greeting of the citizens of Paris, whose joy breaks forth on hearing of the restoration of their king to health. They long to see your royal face once more, and display to you all their happiness at this event. To this intent the Guild of the Holy Passion has prepared a new and brilliant mystery, at which the brethren hope their king will honour them with his royal presence. It is arranged for the hour of one after noon, if it so please you, Sire, to accept this testimony of their homage."

"Thou knowest I have always pleasure,"

replied the king, "in coming face to face with my brave citizens, and showing also countenance to my able and well-beloved brethren of the Passion. I am strong now—I will go forth and see this mummary. But first we will attend a mass at the Holy Church of the Trinity, and beg a blessing upon them and us. But now to work—to work," and he pointed to the table.

"This is unadvisable, Sir Provost, in the present state of seditious excitement," said the Constable angrily.

"Peace, my cousin," interposed the king; "my good citizens will not murmur when they see me."

Armagnac frowned and bit his moustache.

The king had been engaged for some time in conference with the Provost, when suddenly a thought seemed to come across him; he hung his head pensively, and remained in deep reflection for a time. When he at last raised his head, it was to desire that Charles the dauphin might be sent for, accompanied by Messire Tanneguy Duchâtel, but by none other of his associates and companions.

The handsome young prince shortly entered ; his usually careless expression of face had given way to one of some fear, perhaps of some shame. The summons to his father's side was unusual. He was followed by a tall middle-aged man, of colossal size and strength, who in spite of courtly customs in the interior of the palace, was covered with complete armour. The only offensive weapon that he wore, however, was one of those long sharp poniards usually called in that age, "poniards of mercy," attached by a steel chain. In his right hand he held respectfully a velvet cap, trimmed with fur, the only attribute of a more peaceful and domestic attire; and his head, thus uncovered, left a set of features visible, bronzed by the sun and rough by nature, but honest, straightforward, and firm in their expression. This was the brave Tanneguy Duchâtel, who occupied at that time the post of a sort of governor to the dauphin, although generally disregarded, and even sometimes turned into mockery by the wilful and pliant youth, at the instigation of his licentious comrades.

"Charles," said the king, "thou hast caused

me much sorrow, even in my moments of defective reason ; but I will not upbraid thee now. There are those who would have us to believe that thy heart is not bad, although thy head has oft-times been led away to follies."

The dauphin cast a rapid and earnest look at Odette, who ever since the moment of his entrance had cast down her eyes, and who now hung her head still lower, as if to avoid the burning and sharp glance that she saw not, but felt like an electric stroke.

"Dost thou feel thyself capable," continued the royal father, "to stretch forth thy arm, enervated as it may be by thy debaucheries, for the good of thy country, and the defence of thy father's crown and thine own?"

"Father, forgive me," said the young prince, kneeling ; "forgive me the past : tell me thy will ; and let me prove myself a man."

"Prove thyself worthy, Charles," pursued the king, sternly. "I will try thee ; for our unhappy France needs every arm in its support, most of all the arm of its first children. Charles, dauphin of France, I name you Lieutenant-

General of the kingdom, for its welfare and defence. Hand in hand with my good Constable, you shall fight for its deliverance and its glory. My worthy Duchâtel shall follow you still, to aid and counsel you."

"Father!" said the prince, unable to pronounce another word.

"May God bless thee, my Charlot," stammered the king, with the tears standing in his eyes, and stretching forth his arms.

The dauphin hurried to his embrace.

When the young prince rose from that paternal kiss of love and hope, his eyes at last met those of Odette. The face of the fair maid beamed with pure enthusiasm. His own might have told a tale of admiration, love, devotion, mixed with gratitude.

"And now with a lightened heart, and better conscience, we can meet our good citizens of Paris," exclaimed the king, looking up to heaven.

CHAPTER III.

THE KEY OF THE TURRET STAIR.

Now, heaven, thy help, or I am gone for ever :
His tongue has turned me into melting pity.

FLETCHER.

For love it knows it is a greater grief
To bear love's wrongs, than hate's known injury.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE council of the king was continued after the nomination of the Dauphin to the post of Lieutenant-General of the realm ; and Odette had retired from the affecting scene in which she had been a mute actress, in the king's chamber, her heart beating with many excited feelings, for which she was at a loss to render an account to herself. Willingly would she have attributed all the emotion she felt to the attachment she bore to the unhappy king, whom she had tended as a child, and, by the aid of heaven, contributed to restore to reason ; but there was a small still voice within that told her how much

she was deceiving herself. She could not conceal from her own heart that an interest, a strong interest for the young dauphin, had sprung up within her; it was not love—oh no! for how should she love a prince, the heir to the realm of France, whose hand never could be bestowed on her, whose heart she never could accept save as the gift of purity and honour? Oh no, it was not love, of that she was well assured. But yet how eagerly would she have purged her bosom, had she been able, of the new and agitating feelings that had found a lurking-place within it.

Since her first interview with the dauphin, when in the midst of his rude violence and tumultuous passion the king had appeared as a guardian angel to shield her from the polluting touch of the young libertine, she had had frequent opportunities of seeing the prince without his unworthy and licentious companion and tutor. He had approached her again, but with marks of respect, through which, from time to time, a deeper emotion had pierced. The manners of the wild young gallant of the

day were changed for those of a loving and grateful brother ; but still, although never a word was breathed that could offend or startle the pure maiden, there was the breath of deep and ardent passion in the tone, the manner, the look—the more dangerous to her peace of mind because impossible to define or to reprove—the more insinuating and seductive, because it was no art employed, no actor's part played by the young lover, but a genuine, spontaneous, untutored impulse in the youth, who, however led astray by the perfidious counsels of vile associates, was still sufficiently uncorrupted to be full of high feelings and generous thoughts : and that breath had blown over her pure heart like the fevering sirocco.

This change in the manners of the prince had made a powerful impression on the mind of the simple Odette, unknown even to herself. She did not attempt to combat the feeling at first ; she ascribed it to her devotion and attachment to the son of her poor nursling—to the prince who was to wear the crown of France. Her mind was too pure to admit the possibility

of any danger to her virtue, or even her heart. A high religious principle sustained her; and in aid of this principle, although it needed no such aid, stood forward a strange superstitious feeling, that upon her purity and virtue depended her influence, which she had been taught to look upon as heaven-directed, over the wavering mind of the poor king. To lose her purity she would have deemed would be to lose her power to soothe and heal. But still a struggle, a confused sensation, had already arisen in her heart; and now her thoughts fell too much, far too much, upon the young prince; of that she was aware: his graceful form rose far too often before her sight in the lonely musings and dreamings of her chamber; and, although she knew not that she struggled against nature's law, that bids beauty attract beauty, as one flame attracts another until they mingle into one, she knew that new and conflicting emotions, far different from any she had felt before, were astir within her bosom. She felt that her residence in the Hôtel des Tournelles, exposed as she was to the assiduities of the Dauphin, was

embarrassing, if not dangerous; and it was this conviction which had produced the trouble of her mind, when the king had spoken to her of remaining by his side, even were his health to be fully restored.

There were times when she longed to “fly away and be at rest,” free from the troubling emotions that beset her; and then again her deep attachment to the suffering monarch, and her sense of duty, not only to her king, but to what she considered the command of heaven, made her look upon the very thought of quitting him as a crime. The vision of the peaceful cloister would intrude, however, with the desire of that heart’s ease and tranquillity which had been the blessed lot of her girlhood; even her chamber in the house of her aunt, in spite of the low-minded chatter and teasing importunities of Dame Pernelle, appeared a haven of rest to her imagination. At such moments, also, the thought of Perrinet would float over her mind—of that playmate of her childhood, that friend of her girlhood, that lover of her early youth, whom she had been accustomed to

look upon, in some sort, as her affianced husband, to whom every one of the beatings of her heart, not given to the enthusiasm of religion and duty, belonged; and whom, in spite of her inability to feel and comprehend the ardour and intensity of his passion for her, she regarded as a brother and friend, full of high-minded and generous thoughts, as much as of the evil qualities arising out of the impetuosity and impatience of his temper. Yes, she dreamt of Perrinet; and, although the thought of being his wife, and his alone, gave her unwittingly a painful oppression of the heart at such moments, yet she sighed for that peace which as an honest, humble citizen's wife she might have found, and which she found not in the palace.

It was with such ill-defined and conflicting feelings, that she leant upon the stone balustrade of a balcony, adjoining to her chamber, and allowed the breath of the pure spring air, that floated softly over the sunlit gardens of the Hôtel des Tournelles, to play coolingly over her forehead.

This balcony sprang forward in heavy carved

gothic stonework from an arched opening, giving light to a narrow stone landing place, that formed a passage of communication from the bedchamber to a small oratory occupying the space of an adjoining turret; and from the landing place a winding stair twisted round a column down to a small door below that opened upon the garden park. At the rare times when Queen Isabel had inhabited the Hôtel des Tournelles, for the purpose of giving an appearance of decency to her conduct towards her suffering husband, this private door had given her access to the gardens, perhaps afforded means of admission to her chamber, the same now occupied by Odette, to those accomplices of her political intrigues, or companions of her illicit pleasures, whom she had not, in spite of her well-known depravity, dared openly to receive by the entrance of her royal apartments. But the door below had remained locked since the last departure of the queen; the very key had been lost and forgotten. Odette reposed in her chamber in full security that none could disturb her retreat; and that unhallowed chamber was

now hallowed by her purity. The bright spotless lily shed its holy perfume upon the spot where the full-blown rose, armed with its thorns of evil, and gnawed by many a cankerworm, had bloomed gaudily.

As Odette thus leant upon the balcony of the small landing-place adjoining her room, gazing up to the bright skies, the last haven of refuge to all, as she thought, rather than on the stiff formal gardens, remembrances of the fetters of the earth, her attention was aroused to what was passing in them by several loud coarse voices. Three or four men-at-arms were crossing the greensward, halbert in hand, laughing or wrangling among themselves, and sometimes looking around or behind them.

“God’s-death,” said one of them, “we have searched quite enough; and if we don’t make haste and get to the guard-room in time, Masters Guy Swallowall and André Big-Stomach will have devoured our rations as well as their own; and then catch who can; we shall go without our dinners.”

“But the captain said his information was

precise," said another. "Some malefactors had been seen to climb the garden wall; there were two or three, or perhaps half-a-dozen of them, and we must not go back without them."

"Because Master Spindleshanks, Monseigneur the king's barber, chose to fancy he saw them," objected a third, "that's no reason it should be true. That fellow Cocardas is always gaffing after the petticoats until he does not know what a vest and hose are, when he sees them."

"Satan's horns gore me, if there is anything to steal in the whole palace," recommenced the first. "What should any *truands* or malefactors be doing here? they are more likely to have the paw of one of the Barbary lions in the pits upon them, than their own hands upon anything worth stealing. Let those who care for their soup follow me."

"There may be something else than thieves abroad," again observed the more cautious man-at-arms; "they say the Burgundian fellows would care to do nothing better than murdering king and dauphin, and ourselves to boot, be-

cause we all cry 'Armagnac and the white cross, ho!'"

But these observations were overruled by the remark, that sufficient search had been already made; and, after poking their halberd-ends into a fish-pond close by, to see whether any conspirator were concealed in it, the fellows moved on and disappeared round an angle of the building.

Any movement in the great gardens of the sad and half-deserted Hôtel des Tournelles, beyond the occasional passing of a stray domestic, or one of the keepers of the beasts in the park, was so unusual that the attention of Odette had been involuntarily attracted. A vague fear of some impending evil came across her: the rumour of strangers having penetrated into the park, and of the safety of the king and dauphin being compromised, agitated her nervously. Suddenly she was startled by the noise of rustling leaves immediately beneath her. Below the balcony was a clump of bushes, once stiffly trimmed into fantastic shapes, but now allowed to run wild in the general negligence that per-

vaded the royal residence. To her astonishment the head of a strange half-boyish looking figure appeared from this place of concealment ; and before she could withdraw, she perceived, to her still greater surprise, that this singular individual expressed the most extravagant joy at seeing her, and commenced a series of signs, sometimes pointing to her balcony, sometimes to a distant part of the garden. Immediately afterwards, upon a low whistle from the boy, a large monkey sprang from the bushes upon his back, and from thence to his chest. The seeming boy drew a packet from his vest, held it up to the ape, and again recommenced a variety of signs to the animal, with reference to the balcony. The monkey seemed quickly to understand its master : it rapidly clambered up the gothic ornaments in the stonework without, and sprang upon the balustrade by which she stood. Odette started back : the little packet was dropped at her feet ; and, at the sound of another whistle from the boy, the beast again sprang down. Before Odette could recover from her astonishment, the lad was lost in his hiding-place : he

then appeared a little further on, crawling like a serpent, over an intervening space, to a neighbouring thicket of clipped yews,—then disappeared.

So strangely fantastic, as well as incomprehensible to her, had been the whole scene, that for some moments Odette looked at the packet at her feet without touching it. When she at length raised it and opened it, she found nothing within but a few withered leaves and a faded flower. But suddenly the remembrance crossed her of the leaves she had let fall to Perrinet, the lily he had seized and carried off, at her last interview with him. This strange missive, then, came from him: he had sworn to keep those tokens until he should see her again. Her heart beat painfully. Perrinet, then, was close at hand, and had announced himself by that strange messenger. He was one of the supposed malefactors who had entered the garden by stealth: it was for her that he was there. She trembled at the imprudence of this impatient action, at the consequences that might accrue to himself; and, uttering a hasty prayer for his

safety, and for aid and counsel to herself in this emergency, she drew back to consider what was to be done. Presently, she heard the noise of a movement in the lock of the door below: the lock was turned: the door was opened probably; for she heard it closed, and again locked as if from within. She retreated into her chamber. Steps were ascending the stone turret-stair. So impressed was she with the idea that her impetuous lover had sought this means of obtaining an interview with her, that she uttered the name of "Perrinet" as a man's form darkened the doorway opening from her chamber to the landing-place. But a cry of surprise and embarrassment burst from her when she saw that it was the dauphin who stood before her.

"Monseigneur!" exclaimed Odette, starting and colouring deeply. But, with a violent effort, she reassumed her air of calm self-possession; and, crossing her arms, with her usual gesture of repose, over her bosom, she seemed to await the knowledge of the dauphin's will.

The young prince, however, continued to gaze upon her with a sorrowful and reproachful

air ; his brow was knit ; his hands were clasped before him ; but he did not speak.

“ Monseigneur ! ” resumed Odette at last, with an expression of humility and dignity combined ; “ I little expected to have received you thus once more in my chamber. What is your princely will, that you have sought me thus, at this hour, and by such means ? ”

“ Yes, Odette,” said the dauphin, bitterly ; “ Little you expected me, I am now well convinced. It was another, perhaps a more favoured lover, whom you thought to see. Deny it not, maiden ; the name of another escaped your lips, even as I entered : the thought of another clouded your brow with disappointment at the sight of one you love not, although he loves you, far, far too well for his own peace of mind. Another ! you love, then ! Another ! but let him come, the bold, preferred one ; and he shall find that Charles, dauphin of France, will brook no rival where he loves.”

It was with the petulance of a spoilt child that young Charles passionately pronounced these words : but there was a weaker although

a still more profound emotion perceptible in the quavering tones of his voice.

“ I have never given you the right, Monseigneur the Dauphin,” replied Odette, somewhat proudly, “ to address me with such words. Did I love, it is not in your might, or in your right, to question my affections. None have made the dauphin of France the controller of my actions. I am answerable for them only to my God, my good Lady Abbess, and my lord the king. If by your love you mean that unseemly passion, with which you first assailed me—a painful recollection that I would gladly have forgotten—that I have striven, God reads my heart, to banish from my mind, and smother in better, kindlier thoughts of you—if that be your love, it has been already scorned, as it deserved. It was as hateful to me, as it was unsolicited, unsought. Oh! my prince, recall not recollections, painful to me, unworthy of yourself: I would honour Monseigneur the Prince, the son of our beloved king: I would think of him with kindness and devotion: I would—”

As she proceeded, the voice of Odette gradu-

ally faltered more and more : she cast down her eyes for a moment ; but, before the dauphin could again speak she seemed to have overcome her rising emotion, and continued, again resuming her air of gentle pride.

“ Be there between us two—although the one be the dauphin of France, the other a lowly maid—one who has the right to question the motives and actions of the other, it is for me, the poor maid, to question of the prince, why he has intruded stealthily, like a thief in the night, upon the solitude of my chamber, why he would thus unworthily break the trust his altered manners have taught me to repose in him.”

As Odette spoke, the young prince had gradually allowed a softer emotion to supersede his first angry feeling ; and he gazed on her with looks of admiration. His spirit was, in truth, as gentle and malleable as his temper was versatile ; and the calm pride of the beautiful girl, instead of exciting his passion, worked a softening spell upon him.

“ Hear me, Odette,” he said, “ and chide me not thus scornfully. This key—” he showed that

of the turret-stair which he still held—" was forged, when, in the first onset of impetuous passion—my brain on fire, and my blood fevered by the words and counsels of another, I swore to obtain admittance to thy chamber, and compel thy love. But then came the thought of my poor father, like a warning spirit before me. It was thy good angel whispered to my ear the better thought—mine too perhaps; for why should our guardian angel, that unites us upon earth, not be one and the same, Odette? I drove from me the demon thought: I listened neither to the urging counsel nor the mocking laugh. This key, which has thus been long within my hands—long days and nights when the thought of thy bright beauty left me no respite or repose, has been unused: thou know'st it well, Odette; although thou knowest not the power of the tempter often. To-day I could resist no longer the desire of speaking thee once more alone—alone and undisturbed by all observing eyes. It was thy pure influence, that has reconciled me to my father, and obtained from him that mark of confidence he has to-day bestowed—it was

thine, my Lys d'Ange, my angel-lily: my heart told me so at its first beating, as my royal father spoke. Thinkest thou then not, Odette, that I had a debt of thankfulness to pay—a grateful soul to pour out before you? But, away with concealment and subterfuge. It was not that thought alone that urged me hither I avow; my new duties, which, were it not dishonour to fling them aside, I had renounced to remain by thee, will soon call me to the army. I must quit thee, Odette; I must quit thee shortly. And could I leave thee without telling thee, what my eyes, my looks, my very soul must long since have told, if not my tongue, that I love thee, Odette—love thee for thy virtue and thy worth, thy kindliness and thy goodness, as for thy wondrous beauty, with the passionate devotion of a whole life? could I leave thee without seeking to know whether thy pure heart feels no kindness towards him whose love is so ardent and so deep? could I leave thee without a hope?”—and the young prince knelt at her feet, fixing on her his brilliant eyes, burning with passion.

Odette trembled.

“ Rise, rise, my Prince,” she said, subduing her emotion with a strong effort. “ You do wrong ; I must not hear—I should not believe you. Our paths of life are sundered, and for ever. A prince’s love were polluting, killing, soul-destroying, to a poor girl like me were it in dishonour. Were it in honour, it were misery to both. No—no—speak of love no more. Oh ! kneel not thus, my prince. I must not see you thus.” And Odette withdrew a few steps and covered her eyes with her hand, as if to shut out a vision that too powerfully moved her.

“ Ah ! thou dost not love me, thou wilt not love me, cold, cruel, senseless one,” exclaimed the dauphin rising.

Odette again trembled : for a moment she appeared as if she would have spoken : but then she stopped, waved the prince aside with her hand and turned away.

“ Fool—fool that I was,” continued the dauphin sadly. “ I had forgotten all. I had forgotten that name, pronounced as I entered. Thou lovest another : at this very moment, perhaps, thou expectest the joy of clasping to thy

bosom the loved one on whom thou hast bestowed this favour."

The embarrassment of Odette at the thought of Perrinet being actually lurking in the neighbourhood, which was visible in her troubled mien as she turned to upbraid her princely lover for his supposition, inflicted a still deeper wound upon the heart of young Charles. He cut short her expostulations, reproaching her—with concentrated sadness rather than bitterness—partly for her want of love, partly for her love for this unknown rival. The pained unhappy girl strove still to meet his cruel remonstrances with calm dignity; but, in spite of her efforts, her eyes filled with moisture, and the tears ran silently down her cheeks.

At the sight of Odette's tears the feelings of the young prince were again changed: once more he knelt, and begged for pardon for his own cruelty in thus torturing her, and once more rose at her command.

"Tell me that thou lovest not another, my Odette," he said; "and, with that poor consolation, I will content myself."

“As *you* love, as *you* feel and express the passion,” answered Odette, still struggling with her emotion, “I love no other.”

“No one?”

“No one,” she replied.

“Beats not thy heart?—to no emotion?” continued the dauphin, with a supplicating look. “Thou lovest none other, thou sayest: but canst thou not love the prince who would lay down all his worldly power at thy feet, but for a kindly glance of thy sweet eye?”

“My prince I must reverence and honour,” said Odette, by degrees mastering her agitation. “But, again, no question of love must or can pass between us; and even my honour and my reverence to the prince must be thrust back upon me, if he persist in assailing me with words my ears must not hear; and as long as he possesses in his power the means to obtain secret access to my chamber—to my dishonour and my shame.”

“Cold—cold and unkind!” replied the dauphin, reproachfully; while the storm still raged in the bosom of Odette, spite of her power of assuming her exterior air of calm. “But it

shall not be said that Charles the dauphin is still a boy, who would petulantly reject the honour and the reverence of an angel, because she refuses him her love. No; in these last few days I have become a man, and as a man can act. See," he continued, opening a casement of the window and flinging the key away from him with violence, "I throw from me the tempter. By such means, I swear, I will not seek again to see thee. Canst thou look kindly on me now, Odette?"

Odette pressed her hands tightly to her heart, as if to restrain a tumult of emotion she feared might become visible.

"Ay! and think kindly of you, Monseigneur," she answered.

"Odette!" exclaimed the young prince, hurrying to her side, as if these few words were a magnet of hope to him.

"One word more, my prince," said Odette. "We shall meet again in the presence of our lord the king; but now that, for the last time, we are alone together, take the assurance that my prayers to Heaven for your welfare shall

follow you wherever you may go. Honour calls you—may the holy Virgin shield you on the battle field, and give you victory over your enemies, as it has pleased her to give you victory over yourself. The poor Odette will rejoice in your rejoicings—will triumph in your triumphs.”

“Lys d’Ange!” cried the dauphin of France, bending before her, “thou art, indeed, the lily borne aloft by the heaven-sent angel. My lips will not pollute thee, if they touch thy hand so pure; for they touch it with the deepest reverence:” and, as he bent, the dauphin kissed her hand.

When he lifted himself up, Odette was unable to speak; she waved her hand to him to leave her by the usual entrance of the apartment. Again he cast on her a long look of fond admiration, and was gone.

Odette then grew very pale. She clenched her hands more tightly over her breast with a shudder; and, as if the action had forced it from her, a heavy sigh escaped her bosom. It was responded to by a deep groan behind her. Odette turned with an exclamation of alarm.

Leaning against the arch opening upon the landing-place—deadly pale as a ghost—stood Perrinet Leclerc. His eyes were staring and haggard; his upper lip trembled convulsively; while with his right hand he grasped the hilt of his dagger, with that nervous movement which was customary to him in moments of strong excitement.

When the first startling feeling of surprise had passed away, it was with her usual calm self-possession that Odette advanced towards the young armourer, and greeted him sadly.

“It was not thus, Perrinet, that I hoped to have seen thee again,” she said earnestly. “I will believe in the force of thy affection; I will make allowance for the deep attachment that urges thee to take so strong an interest in my welfare. But oh! thou hast allowed thy impatient temper to urge thee to a step that may bring with it a train of bitter evils. Look not thus wildly—thus angrily upon me. I speak not for myself—I speak but for thee. Danger surrounds thee in this frantic plan thou hast adopted for thus forcing thyself into my pre-

sence. In these times of faction and suspicion the worst motives may be attributed to thy intrusion into the royal residence. Already thy bold deed has been perceived and known—already they have searched for thee as a malefactor. I entreat thee, Perrinet, remain not here. Go—fly—retreat as thou hast come, ere it be too late. It is for me that thou hast dared to do this deed—I do believe it. Thou wouldst be assured by thine own eyes of my welfare. Take the assurance from mine own lips of my well-being, and go. Better times will come, when we may be happy—yes, happy *together*, Perrinet, and we may forget the separation and the constraint. But go—fly from hence, for my sake, Perrinet, torture me not with fears for thy safety; again I say, danger surrounds thee. Go, and the conviction of my affection—my sisterly affection,” she added hastily, as though she feared to go beyond the truth, even in the shadow of a word’s meaning—“go with thee as a leading-staff of comfort and of hope, if such it still can be to thee. Ah! he does not hear me,” she pursued in an alarmed tone, seeing

that Perrinet still glared on her, as one bereft of sense; “he will not hear me. Perrinet, as thou lovest me—as thou hast loved me from our earliest days of childhood, stand not thus transfixed to fright me with thy mien: rouse thee—say, ‘God comfort thee, Odette’—and go!”

“So young—with such a halo of purity and truth about her brow, and yet so artful!” muttered Perrinet at last between his set teeth.

“Perrinet, thou alarmest me,” exclaimed Odette, clasping her hands.

“I had rather she plunged a dagger in my heart,” still muttered the young man, motionless; “I had rather she had said at once, ‘I hate thee; get thee gone like a serpent from my path,’—than that she had wronged my love thus coldly—thus calmly. So artful! Can the angels in heaven be pure when she is base?”

“Perrinet, thy words are words of madness,” exclaimed Odette again.

“Madness! yes, tell me that I am mad—make me believe that my senses know their use no longer—persuade me that I neither see nor hear aright;” cried Perrinet, starting up from

his motionless position; “gull me into the belief that a profligate boy knelt not at thy feet, to kiss thy hand with words of love, and with lewd courtship—that his eyes burned not with the fire of gratified passion—that thou thyself—thyself, Odette, didst not respond to all the ardour of the pretty youth—the licentious, the debauched, the effeminate boy-prince. Oh! madness! it was madness—was it not?”

“Perrinet!” exclaimed Odette, with a cry, partly of shame, partly of bitter reproach, and raising her eyes to heaven, she let fall her arms beside her with a gesture of utter despair.

“Yes, it *was* madness!” continued Perrinet bitterly; “it was madness to believe in thy affection, when, with a beating heart, that throbbed nigh to bursting with joy, I obtained by the aid of a poor beast, more true-hearted than many mortal beings, possession of the key—the key of yonder turret stair, leading to thy chamber—which thou didst fling from the casement of thy window, and which fell upon the turret water-pipe beyond my reach. It was madness even for a moment to entertain the

rapturous thought, that thou didst thus give thy poor despairing Perrinet the means to approach thee, to clasp thee once again to his distracted bosom. Madness! But wast thou also mad, girl, to bid me come but to be witness of thy false love for another? Was it for this—to wring my heart to breaking—to give the last blow to my crushed affections—to drive me to distraction by the sight of thy falsehood and thy shame—and then coldly and calmly to bid me begone—that didst call me to thee? Was it thy lover taught thee a lesson of cruelty so refined? But lessons are not learnt in vain; and he shall learn too that I forget not this.” And Perrinet again handled the hilt of his dagger.

“That key! Oh! he has much to answer for,” murmured Odette, quailing before the storm of passion from her lover, and covering her face with her hands.

“It was not, then, for me?” exclaimed Perrinet, again finding, like a true jealous lover, cause of wrath even in the idea the most opposed to that which angered him. “Thou didst receive that missive containing the faded recol-

lections of a happier time, when I did deem thee true—faded, faded, alas! And thou didst not bestow one thought more upon that heart which loved thee ardently, and on which they withered; thou didst fling them away, perhaps, with a mocking laugh, to forget them the next moment in the arms of thy princely lover!”

He paused; but Odette spoke not, moved not. The painful pause, the silence, gave time to the angry passion of Perrinet to cool down in some measure from its first burning glow; and it was with almost as much of sorrow as of anger, that he at last continued. “Was it thus, Odette, after such a separation, after all my doubts, my fears, my agonies, my sufferings, that we should meet again?”

There was that, perhaps, in the tone of voice of Perrinet as he spoke these last words, that vibrated to the heart of the shocked and offended girl, as a remembrancer of happier times gone by; for it was upon an allusion to the past that she touched, when she at length removed her hands from her face, and with an expression of sorrowful reproach, addressed him mildly.

“It needs all my recollections of our early days, Perrinet,” she said, slowly, and as if weighing each of her words, “of the boy’s kindness to the child, the man’s devotion to the girl, to make me bear with thee, after heaping upon my head so unmerited, so cruel a load of obloquy. But I will make allowances for the impatience of thy temper; I will even place thy passion to the account of thy love for me. I will forgive thee.”

“Forgive me! Forgiveness from *thee* to *me*!” broke in the passionate young man, “when it is thou who hast betrayed — thou who hast injured — thou who hast forsworn!”

Odette’s self-possession, arising from her sense of purity and truth, did not desert her: a hasty sigh alone escaped her; but her face lost not its calm although sad expression.

“Hear me,” she said, interrupting Perrinet; “if, by the command of our good Lady Abbess, if, by the will of Heaven,” and she cast her eyes upwards, with a look of enthusiasm, “I have been ordained to undertake a holy duty, dost thou not suppose that it was in fear and

trembling, and in a spirit of self-abnegation? Thou shouldst have pitied, encouraged, prayed for me, and bided other times. If it has pleased the holy saints to bless my efforts——”

“The will of Heaven! A holy duty!” again broke in the impetuous lover, “to be the light of love of a licentious prince! These are ravings, girl!”

“Shame on thee for those words, Perrinet!” exclaimed Odette, a deep flush of colour now covering her face. She paused; the colour again faded; and, with another mastering effort, she added, calmly, “Knowest thou not the cause of my dwelling beneath this roof?”

“I know nought but that I have seen that boy courting thee beneath thy window—that thou wast torn from me—that I found thee here, listening to his words of love——”

“No more!” exclaimed Odette. “Hear me with a moment’s patience. They told me that God had chosen me for a great and sublime mission,—that in this palace was an anointed king, into whose hands God had given the welfare of a mighty people, but a king whose only

crown was a crown of thorns upon a tortured brow, whose sceptre had fallen from his powerless hands, whose throne was the bed of suffering and anguish,—a poor king, old before his time, even in the strength of his manhood; more miserable than the most wretched of his subjects; degraded below the condition of the soulless animal, since even the instinct of the animal was bereft him,—a poor, wretched king, to whom none gave a hand when he stretched forth his arms for pity, for whom none wiped away the tears that trickled down his withered cheeks, when he shed them in his misery,—our beloved martyr-monarch, Charles of France. They told me that with soothing power I could calm his spirit; that with tending hand I could mitigate his sufferings: that, with Heaven's aid, I might restore his reason. I humbly obeyed. I came. I came hither filled with a deep compassion for so deep a misery,—but as a trembling victim that offers itself a sacrifice to the great weal of many, the sacrifice of expiation on the horns of the altar,—never—never as the base degraded being that thou wouldst think me in

thy frantic passion. But enough of that—let us forget thy words. Heaven has blessed my humble efforts. The reason of our unhappy monarch is restored.” And Odette looked up to heaven, as if in silent prayer.

The look of angelic purity that pervaded the bright being, whose lot had been so strangely cast, whose name had been so strangely taken from its obscurity to cast a halo over a dark page of history, worked its spell upon the impetuous and suspicious temper of her lover. Her simple tale, told with the unstudied eloquence of the heart, softened and humbled him for the time.

“Can this be true?” he stammered at last.

“I thought that thou hadst known me, Perrinet,” was the answer of Odette.

“Yes, I do believe thee,” replied Perrinet; “but yet—but yet—what mine own eyes have seen, what mine own ears have heard, I cannot purge from my memory, or believe the false evidences of my own senses. That boy-prince loves thee, Odette; he courts thee, pours flattering words into thine ears, and thou—thou

listenest to him. Thy mind may be still pure; and yet thy woman's heart may give way to the insinuating poison of man's passion. Perhaps thou already lovest him. Oh! could I think it—could I think thee so false!”—and Perrinet's passion, for a moment calmed, again flashed from his eyes.

Odette started; once more she blushed painfully; and the angry feelings of Perrinet, whose eyes were scrutinizingly bent upon her, were still more roused by this evidence of trouble and emotion.

“Ah! thou lovest him, girl,” he resumed.

“Perrinet, my friend,” interrupted Odette, “I have no answer to give thee to thy words but this. It was but a short time ago I thought on thee with kindness, on thy affection with gratitude; I dreamt a dream of hope that we might be happy, when my fatal mission might be once accomplished.”

“But it is accomplished—it is done; the king's reason is restored, thou sayest; thou hast no longer any duty to bind thee here,” exclaimed Perrinet, impetuously. “Come with

me, then. Fly with me from the contaminating and polluting influence of this cursed dwelling, this hateful and justly hated Hôtel des Tournelles. Come, come at once. Come, be my wife—come, fulfil at once that dream of hope of which thou speakest. Come!” And, taking Odette by the hand, he endeavoured to pass his arm round her waist, as if to drag her from thence.

“This must not be,” replied the poor girl, gently disengaging herself. “My duty is still here. Our beloved king still claims my humble services. I have sworn to him my devoted efforts to the last. I cannot, must not, *will* not, quit him. Nor could I thus fly with thee in shame, like the thoughtless being, lost to honour and to virtue, thou wouldst have termed me. It cannot be; thou canst not ask it, Perrinet. Calm thee, calm thee; and let us part now.”

“Thou triflest with me, Odette,” resumed the lover, impatiently. “These means thou hast to tear my cruel doubts from my heart, to prove the truth of thy attachment; refuse them not,—refuse them not, I say: thou knowest

not all the unhappiness that may be the issue of thy obstinacy."

"Alas! alas! that fatal temper!" cried Odette, in despair. Then with the words, "Perrinet, it cannot be," she turned away.

"Odette, I warn thee," pursued the young man. "The tempter has been at work: and the demon is already busy about my soul. Come with me; and we may be happy in our humble sphere. I can bear this state of things no longer! Refuse me, then: and, whatever be the deed, I swear that I will work such a one that thou shalt no longer be the slave of a mad king, nor become the paramour, willing or unwilling, of a licentious prince. Oh! they shall all taste my vengeance, all—prince, court, and that tyrant Constable, whose wiles have brought thee hither. Thou seest I know that it was he,—the Armagnac. Curses on him! Odette, again I warn thee, choose!"

Odette was evidently moved and startled by the violence of the infatuated young man: she trembled at his words; but she did not yield.

"Perrinet," she said, drawing up her slight

frame, and lifting up a hand aloft, "I too warn *thee*. I have already told thee, that as long as truth and honour are cherished in thy bosom, I will think of thee with affection, and once be thine. When thou forgettest them, will I forget thee and thrust thee from me. As there is a God above us, who sees and judges all hearts, and who punishes the evil-doer, I conjure thee to desist from thy bad purpose, for such thy angry words reveal it, whatever it may be. And may that God strengthen me in the vow I make, and, at the same time, turn thee from all evil."

Perrinet was in turn startled by the firm manner and the energetic words of Odette ; he knit his brow and bent his head irresolute. The high-minded girl clasped her hands and watched his every movement with anxiety. After an evident struggle with himself, he was about to speak again, when Odette suddenly interrupted him.

"Hark!" she cried. "There is a rumour in the palace ; I hear the noise of halbert-ends upon the floor in the rooms beyond. Perrinet, it is thou whom they seek. I had forgotten this ;

foolish girl! this should have been my first thought. But now, fly, fly before it be too late. Oh go! suspicions are aroused; and perhaps even I could not save thee from danger." She ran to the open casement. "See! the garden is clear. Fly, by the way thou camest—for my sake, fly."

Perrinet still lingered; but he gave way at last to Odette's continued entreaties.

"But I know where to find thee now: and we shall meet again before long," he exclaimed as he hurried through the opening to the landing-place.

"No—no; I entreat thee, no!" cried Odette, who had followed him as he descended the stairs.

She clasped her hands: for a moment she thought him gone; but Perrinet again mounted the stairs hastily.

"The door is locked below—the key is gone!" he said.

"Lost! lost!" sobbed Odette.

At the same moment she heard the door of her chamber open violently.

"Hide thee in the oratory," she said hur-

riedly, and then placed herself in her room before the opening to the balcony. An officer of the palace, and several men-of-arms had entered the apartment. Before she had time to question them as to the cause of their intrusion, the Constable himself followed.

“ Pardon me, fair Odette,” he said, somewhat haughtily. “ It seems clear, by information that has reached us, that a malefactor has entered the palace by means of that turret stair below, which communicates only with this chamber and the oratory of the queen beyond. The safety of Monseigneur the king is compromised—his life, perhaps, in danger. It is my duty to order the most vigorous search to be made. Know you of no person hidden here? You seem troubled, maiden,” he added suspiciously.

Odette stood, pale as death, before the opening.

“ Speak! is there no one here?” recommenced Armagnac sternly.

“ There is no one in my chamber,” stammered Odette.

“ Let search be made beyond,” commanded the Constable to the officer.

The officer advanced.

“No—no,” exclaimed Odette; “the king himself shall know all. To him I will appeal. In his name I entreat that you take no step further.”

“To the king also will I be answerable,” replied the Constable; “Advance!”

Odette closed her eyes with a feeling of faintness: she felt that all resistance was in vain.

“By your leave, fair maid,” said Armagnac, taking her by the arm. But at the same moment he drew back with an exclamation of surprise. A man advanced into the room from the landing place. The surprise of Odette was no less. It was again the dauphin.

“Leave the poor girl, gentle cousin,” said the prince, “no one is there!”

Odette remained as one thunderstruck.

“Had I but known, fair cousin, your deep interest in our pretty nurse here, trust me I had not thus caused her chamber to be invaded, to the interruption of your pleasant interviews,” replied the Constable with a sneer.

After a few more words of courtesy, in which a tone of irony still dwelt, interchanged with

the dauphin, the Count Armagnac ordered the officer and men to retire, and left the chamber, with a stern look at Odette.

Bewildered, embarrassed with shame and confusion, Odette could not speak; she looked to the dauphin for an explanation.

“He is gone,” said the young prince coldly, but yet with an air of sorrow. “He found the oratory closed—for I was there within: but he dropped from the balcony and has escaped unhurt.”

“The saints be praised!” exclaimed Odette ingenuously.

“Ah! why did I return to seek again that key, lest it fall into other hands?” recommenced the dauphin, after a pause, in a voice trembling with emotion. “Why, when to my surprise, I found it in the lock, did I mount the stair once more with pained and troubled heart? Odette! Odette! I did not think that thou couldst so deceive! Thou lovest no one, saidst thou. Why give me hope that thou couldst love me still—why conceal the truth? Judge of my love for thee when thou seest that I did not kill that

preferred one, on the spot. Odette! I leave thee to thy love; there is the key." He flung it on a table. "Be happy! Oh! thy deceit has destroyed all my last faith in woman's truth." And, with the words "Odette! Odette!" uttered in the tone of the deepest reproach, the young prince left the room, gazing on her as he retired.

"On all sides misunderstood, suspected, scorned!" murmured Odette to herself, standing with bent head on the same spot where the prince had left her. "Oh! my heart will break! But no"—she resumed after a pause, "my king shall know all: he will defend me." And she raised her head more boldly. "Alas!" she again muttered in despair, "he would perhaps chide his son, that he should have spoken to me of love—he would again meet him in anger—that cannot be. Heaven is above all!" she said at last. "Holy Virgin! thou, the pure mother of all purity, thou wilt aid and counsel me!" And Odette sank on her knees, crossing her arms before her—an angelic vision.

In an anteroom of the Hôtel des Tournelles,

stood Master Cleofas, the *mire*, in his usual attire, rubbing his hands, with an air of malicious satisfaction in his sharp dark eyes, as he was engaged in earnest confabulation with his ancient rival, Master Cocardas, the barber.

“Come hither, fellow,” said the Constable angrily, beckoning Cleofas to him, as he passed through the apartment. “Thou hast deceived me. Thou hast promised to deliver into my hands one of the ringleaders of the late riot of the students in favour of Burgundy. Thou saidst that he purposed coming hither, a former lover, to seek out this Odette, this fantastic girl. Thy information was false. It was not he who was in her chamber. Have a care how thou again dost thy work so ill. I can reward; but I can punish also. The scourge and the chain may yet find employment on thy back and legs.”

“*Comes illustrissime, juro et protesto.* I do protest and swear;” commenced Cleofas in a whining tone of expostulation.

But the Constable passed on, unheeding him, repeating the uncomfortable words, “Scourge and chains, Master *Mire*.”

“How did he get off, the cursed fellow?” exclaimed Cleofas, more pale than ever with rage. “I overheard his plan, and marked it well. You say you watched them hither, Master Cocardas—him and that wretched boy?”

Master Cocardas assented.

“And he has thwarted me,” pursued the quack doctor; “thwarted me doubly, of my reward, and of my revenge on him for the business of that boy, on whom light Satan’s curses.”

“We will have him yet, this Perrinet Leclerc,” insinuated Master Cocardas, with a pleasing smirk of malice. “I hate the fellow, too. He called me ‘puppy,’ once—me! And had he not stood in my way—who knows? the fair Lys d’Ange, who is now so high in favour at Court, might have been mine, and made my fortune. She always looked upon me with a look—a look—in short—I am not vain, or I might say much. Pagh! I hate the fellow.”

Cleofas pressed his new associate’s hand.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GUILD OF THE HOLY PASSION.

The play's the thing.

SHAKSPEARE.

The scene begins to cloud.

IBID.

It was shortly before the hour of noon, on the same 28th of May, in the year 1418, that a dense crowd was assembled in the great gothic hall of the old hospital of the Trinity, situated in the Rue St. Denis, upon the space now occupied by the houses opposite to the Rue du Caire. The edifice itself was of some extent; and annexed to it were a considerable cloister, a vast enclosure arranged as an orchard, and a chapel, constructed in the twelfth century and dedicated to the Holy Trinity, as its name indicated. The building had been originally intended for the reception of the sick poor; and the establishment had been directed by monks of a

peculiar order, called by the people the "*Frères Aniers*," from the peaceful animals upon which they promenaded the town when in quest of offerings for the poor. An accusation of mal-administration and mismanagement of the funds, however, had caused these brethren to be driven from their establishment; and after a considerable struggle with the authorities of the city of Paris, the celebrated "*Confrères de la Sainte Passion*," the first disciples of the dramatic art in France, the first enactors of "private theatricals," who had formed an association for the purpose of representing religious "mysteries" and moralities "to the edification of the faithful," and "to the praise and glory of God," had obtained from Charles VI. letters patent, giving them a grant of the building for their representations in public, and constituting their society into a formal company or guild, with the privilege of enacting "God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Holy Virgin, and other saints of Paradise," together with "Adam and Eve, Abraham, Isaac, Moses, and the apostles, and all other personages of Holy Writ, whether

in Old or New Testament," expressly for "the maintenance, promulgation, and better understanding of our holy religion." Strange times were those, indeed, and almost incomprehensible in modern days, when these travesties of biblical and sacred history were looked upon as matters of edification as much as popular amusement! Almost incredible seems the historical fact, that these grotesque parodies of the Divinity, and all the most sacred mysteries of religion, were recommended by the clergy in their sermons as "good works;" and that the hours of divine service were frequently changed, in order to permit the "faithful" to be present at their edifying performance. But so it was. And not only did the "Guild of the Holy Passion" contain among its members—among its brethren, as they were termed—the established citizens of Paris, the master-masons, carpenters, or locksmiths, together with scholars of the University, but grave magistrates and severe ecclesiastics. To preserve the illusion of these "pious representations," they lasted, on frequent occasions, the length of a whole day, and were

even sometimes spun out to the duration of some forty days, during which the whole history of the New Testament was performed; so that a piously assiduous spectator of every performance might be said to lead an artificial life confounding the fictitious with the actual—the dream with the reality.

On this occasion, however, a simple “morality” alone, “perfectly new, and having never yet served,” had been announced by the “Guild of the Sacred Passion,” to be offered to Monseigneur the King Charles, as a mark of rejoicing in the citizens of Paris at the happy restoration of the beloved monarch to health and reason, and as a pleasant and diverting amusement to royalty itself. As soon as it was known that it had pleased Monseigneur the King to accept the entertainment of his “dear and well-beloved brethren of the Passion,” as he was wont to term them, and even before, a perfect flood of humanity of all classes, ranks, ages and sexes, had inundated the Rue St. Denis and forced its way into the great hall of the Trinity. The “faithful” were already packed together

in a close and sweltering crowd—a strange and confused assemblage, in which all were mixed pell-mell—such as few modern theatres or popular *fêtes* of the present day could exhibit. To none was the entrance denied: and naturally the common people, miserable, ignorant, oppressed, eager for amusement, and ardent of excitement, which made them forget, for a time, their misery and their wrongs, rushed to the “show” upon these occasions with all the frenzy of their gross appetites, with all the dangerous spirit of permitted saturnalia, as fearful in their joy as in their discontent, the slaves of yesterday, the kings of to-day, and as ready, in the one form as in the other, to “turn and rend.”

The crowd then was intense, and awaited, with more or less of patience, the arrival of the king, who was known to be attending a high mass in the chapel of the Trinity, previously to the representation of the “mystery;” and motley and fantastic was the scene. Had any one of the heads of angels, or cherubim, or monsters, that formed the connecting knots to the ribs of the crossing arches of the ceiling, all glittering

with blue colour and golden stars, belonged by any possibility to a living being, thus hung above to gaze down upon the moving mass below, three at least of the senses of that luckless individual would have been most violently assailed—the sense of hearing, by the confused and discordant clamour that pealed and reechoed along the vault—of smell, by the unfragrant odour that steamed up upon the heavy air from a crowd, composed, in great part, of such unsavoury elements—of sight, by the distracted conglomeration of physiognomies, so strange and diversified, dresses so motley and so varied, and colours, that mixed with one another like the ingredients on the pallet of a mad painter. Respectable citizens in grave dresses of dark cloths or velvets, with their spouses or their daughters by their sides, in gayer attire, bending beneath the weight of their monstrous pointed or padded head-dresses, which formed the subject of many an objurgation or coarse joke to the lower classes, were shouldered by sturdy beggars, in brown or red rags, who had all at once forgotten their crippled limbs, their sufferings and their sores: saucy

pages in dresses of gold thread embroidery and gaudy colours, pushed, quarrelled, and jested with brawling artisans in their scolloped capes : young sons of citizens, the dandies of the day, whom such saturnalia allowed not to be exclusive, with their fan-tailed and scarf-wound caps of varied shades, displayed their overweening insolence to monks in robes of black, brown, or white, and often met their match : scholars from the University on the other side of the water, in their attire of sober serge, or in fashions, intended to imitate those of the “ gay young gentlemen ” of the times, herded in knots and noisy bands amidst soldiers, casqued and plumed, and brawling bare-necked females, half ragged, yet with dissolving paint upon their cheeks, and long-moustached adventurers and thieves, and half-crushed squalling children. As is usual on such occasions, few or none were content with the places they had obtained : all pushed and squeezed, and thrust forward, and scolded, and expostulated, and fought and screamed ; until the whole mass, not unfrequently, waved backwards and forwards in a fierce and overflowing

tide. The flood of human beings had not only inundated its natural bed, the pavement of the hall; it had mounted, in the shape of hardy youths, up to the recesses of the great gothic windows, that on one side lighted the vast hall, upon the overhanging sculptured porch of the great entrance door, upon every salient piece of woodwork, and, lastly, not only upon the bases but upon the sculptured capitals of the stone pillars, that supported, on either side, the arches of the aisles—uneasy and dangerous seats, that showed how much, in all ages, the population of Paris, however scanty the *panis*, considered the *circenses* as more worth than limb or life. Two spaces alone in the hall were left uninvasioned by the human inundation; not so much, it would seem, from any fear of the men-at-arms stationed before each, but in one case from respect, in the other from necessity.

The one spot was occupied by a low but broad estrade still empty, erected directly before a side door in the centre of the wall opposite to the windows, draperied along the sides of its scaffolding by rich cloths, and covered on its surface

by bright tapestry hangings in guise of carpeting: a large high-backed and sculptured arm-chair upon this platform, covered with a cloth of gold, and canopied by a huge gilt crown, ticklishly suspended on the top of a pole at the back of the chair, showed that this privileged place was reserved for the king and court: two stools, also covered with brocade, were placed for the use of those whose rank permitted their being seated in the royal presence.

The other space, necessarily left unstormed, was that occupied by the permanent stage erected for the performances of the Brethren of the Passion, at the end of the hall opposite to the great entrance. The huge cage of heavy scaffolding that composed this primitive theatre, was divided into two separate compartments, the upper one of which was again similarly subdivided into three. The lower compartment was covered with draperies that concealed its interior, and served as tiring-room and green-room, to say nothing of a thousand other usages, for the numerous actors in the mysteries. The upper compartment formed a stage, the scenery of

which was almost entirely permanent; and its horizontal subdivisions, already mentioned, composed each a species of low room, one side of which was opened to the public, somewhat after the fashion of monstrous dolls'-houses in modern times. The lowest of these subdivisions was painted with the most fantastic devices of flames, intermingled with grotesque heads of demons and tortured distorted faces. This was the invariable and permanent Hell of the Holy Mysteries; and very properly and decorously frightful all Paris knew that it was. The middle subdivision, on which took place the doings of the earth, was adorned with rude representations of trees and castellated buildings, and "for this time only" with a still coarser painting of blue stripes, with the figure of a boat behind it, probably intended to be a correct delineation of the sea: and curiosity was already awake in the more devout or dramatically disposed of the crowd, to know how these occasional devices were to be used, seeing that against the side of this middle space, was affixed a board, on which, traced in rude characters, was writing indicating that the

“morality” about to be represented was “The highly diverting and right marvellous mystery of the Apocalypse of Monseigneur Saint John.” But it was the upper subdivision that necessarily attracted the general gaze, and called forth the plaudits of the crowd, when it was disposed to be good-tempered. In truth it was a most glittering affair, all covered and behung with blue clouds, and golden stars, and one very big sun and a horned moon, which wavered to and fro, and strips of gilt paper, and cherubim on hard sculptured fat clouds, and draperies of gold, and rich tapestries, and stiff rows of the brightest and stiffest artificial flowers in golden flower-pots on either side: and it had a great arm-chair, almost as fine as that of earthly majesty, in the midst, and two lower gold-bedecked stools on either side of the arm-chair, and a little foot-stool on one side for a minor personage: and no one, even with the weakest fancy, could doubt for a moment, that all this wondrous finery could represent anything else but heaven, and a most beautiful and well-devised heaven also: and, upon this special and important occasion it

would appear that the heaven had been garished all afresh, and newly painted with all sorts of unknown glories: for, upon the entrance of the crowd, there had been a great shout, and a universal exclamation that so well-appointed and pleasant a heaven had never been seen before by mortal eyes.

Of a truth the heaven was wonderfully gorgeous, and the earth, and its buildings, and its sea, were all more natural than could be exceeded by human art; and the hell, although not retouched with any new sulphur-colour on this occasion, was sufficiently abominable to look at, to twinge any refractory consciences; and the spectators would have been guilty of the sin of ingratitude had they not been highly content. But there were spots upon all these fine and natural devices, which custom probably brought the audiences of the Brethren of the Holy Passion to overlook; for in the midst of the back-scene of clouds above, was a door covered with red curtains, for the admission of the actors into this compartment; and in the sky of the middle stage a similar opening; and in the

midst of the infernal flames below no less a one, which all, it must be admitted, somewhat detracted from the illusion of the scenes they represented: and, moreover, a flight of steep steps descended from a hole in the corner of the heaven upon the earth, and another mounted from the infernal realms in similar fashion to the same region, to admit of the intervention of supernatural agency from either quarter, in earthly affairs: but although this means of communication between the three religious subdivisions was neither very ghostly nor very convenient or graceful, yet there seemed to be no critics inclined to cavil or carp at this primitive mode of bringing heaven, earth, and hell together.

As yet all was empty in each one of these several regions; and the huge cage of scaffolding appeared utterly dead and deserted: but those who could have cast a glimpse upon the narrow space between the further side and the wall that terminated the hall, might have seen that it was far otherwise. A crowd of fantastically-dressed personages were swarming about like bees in a

hive, wandering in and out of the curtains covering the undermost compartment, or sitting tired and impatient on the ground, or occupying various staves of the rude ladders of different lengths that led up to the entrances of the several stages. An old organist had fallen asleep over the keys of the organ placed against the wall; his little bellows-blower was crying because he had been snubbed by the chorister-boys, borrowed of a neighbouring church, for the purpose of singing invisible choruses, whose pride in their white gowns and pointed black caps, caused them to look down upon the poor tattered urchin at the bellows, as a creature of inferior race. A young scholar, newly shaved for the occasion, dressed in a wonderfully fine brocaded robe, and with a spangled veil hanging from a pyramid on his head, and a crown of gilt glory surmounting all—finery despoiled from some statue of the Virgin for the purpose, by some pious ecclesiastic—evidently ready dressed for the part of the Holy Mother, was squatting on his heels to play at dice with a soldier, and swearing "*cornes de Satan!*" when he lost, after

no feminine or very edifying fashion. A respectable old gentleman in the finest embroidered cope and stole, clearly the loan of some good priest, and with long white flowing perriwig and false beard, whose superiorly venerable aspect marked him at once as the highest personage of the grotesque, and, to modern understandings, blasphemous comedy, was talking politics very quietly with a stout and ferocious-looking personage in a velvet robe all covered with knobs of gold and silver, and with a gigantic sabre by his side, whom his truculent aspect and his red beard might have pointed out at once as the "villain" of the morality, even if he had not borne a sort of sign upon his breast painted with the words, "I am the cruel tyrant Domitian." Angels there were many in goodly show, pinching and skirmishing with one another; and devils also, with their names of "Lucifer," "Beelzebub," and so forth, embroidered on their black vests, who were quietly singing a hymn among themselves, with their tails tucked up, like ladies' trains, upon their arms. A poor little boy in

blue spangled dress, and a very new pair of wings, the youthful enacter of the Holy Spirit, was looking very piteous because Monseigneur Saint John, in a pair of variegated pantaloons, and with the most brilliant fan-tailed cap upon his head, was scolding him for having eaten too much gingerbread; while a consequential, discontented-looking personage, dressed in black, with a roll of manuscript in one hand, the author of the "highly diverting and right marvellous mystery" about to be represented, was endeavouring to impress upon the memory of an obtuse Satan, whom he held by one of his horns, the beautiful verses he was to enounce to the world.

There was evidently among all the troop a considerable degree of impatience and annoyance: the hour of representation was passed, the king and court had not yet arrived; and those who had dined scantily, or not yet dined at all, grumbled audibly.

In the midst of these varied groups, upon the top of the longest ladder, leading to the highest and most brilliant compartment of the stage,

stood a bright black-eyed girl, peeping cautiously through the curtains into the wonders of heaven. A sickly-looking, grey-haired man held her round the waist on a stave below, and seemed to gaze, with scarcely less satisfaction upon his good homely face, at the show contained there.

“Father,” said the girl, with a joyous smile, “you could not have better pleased me than by thus bringing me with Yvon—Where is he?”—she looked down—“ah! there below, looking as mournful as usual”—a sigh—“to see the beautiful Paradise you have so bravely painted. It was kind, also, of the brethren to permit our entrance with you. Surely, never was such a beautiful Paradise devised and painted, and never will be again. Oh, father! no one will ever surpass you in the goodly art. Surely, the name of Jacquenim Gringonneur must go down to all ages as the limner of this Paradise.”

Poor, good Jacquenim! his name *has* come down to remote ages, but for his painting of pictures that savour more of hell than heaven.

“Of a truth,” replied the artist, with a look of simple pleasure, “it is a very fair and goodly

Paradise. I am not ill pleased with mine own efforts. Fortune has favoured me lately. Let me now know thee happy, my Lyonelle ; and I shall go down to the grave with a contented heart."

"You will live to be a great man, father," said Lyonelle ; "and in that thought shall be all my happiness : and, while you love me, what do I want more ?—for nobody else will ever love me—nobody." Lyonelle shook her head, sadly ; but then, with a beaming smile, she called to Yvon to come up and look again. Yvon, however, was seated on the lowest stave of the ladder, with his head buried between his hands, and did not hear her. So Lyonelle shrugged her shoulders, arched her pretty eyebrows pettishly, and peeped through the curtain again.

"What a crowd I see," she said, "at the further end of the hall ! How they move hither and thither—like corn blown by an angry wind ! and what a clamour they raise ! How I should fear to be a man, and have to enact a part before them ! Holy Virgin ! how impatient they are !"

In truth, the crowd was getting very im-

patient, and, consequently, more cross-grained and obstreperous than ever. There might, also, be other causes that added to the gradually growing murmur of discontent.

The fermentation existing in the suffering city of Paris had increased rather than diminished since the outbreak of the quickly suppressed revolt in the Rue St. Denis, followed by the students' riot on the evening of the same day, on the other side of the Seine. The repressive power, however, in the hands of the government, (that is to say, in the hands of the Count Armagnac, Constable of France,) was still too strong to be effectually resisted without the aid of a chief of weight and name, who might know how to organize, direct, and wield the elements of sedition. It needed a Jupiter to seize the scattered morsels of the thunderbolt, in order to hurl them with due effect against the "tyrant," "the devil in man's hide," as he was called. The last hopes of the citizens for relief began to be turned more and more towards the Duke of Burgundy, as their best protector and friend. Priests had openly expounded from the pulpits

thinly veiled parables, only partially enveloped in religious or mystic language, in which the suffering flocks were represented as desiring the rescuing claws of the lion to save them from the jaws of the wolf: and the people, in their desire to be delivered from the "wolf," forgot that the "lion," in its turn, might rend and devour them. But the city was well guarded, and by trusty agents: the expedition last made by the Duke of Burgundy against Paris had signally failed; and it was known that the disappointment had driven that bold and rebellious vassal of the crown of France almost frantic with rage. Thus, although a great majority of the populace of Paris was all ready for revolt, the guiding hand was still wanting, and, still more, the necessary armed force to resist the military agents of the Armagnac authority. The violent repressive measures lately taken continued to overawe the more wealthy, and consequently more cautious, of the citizens; the spies of Armagnac had increased the general terror, by their denunciations, true or false, of suspected Burgundians; and these denunciations had been followed by

arbitrary arrests, that instilled into every one the fear that his own turn might next come. Still, however, the general excitement had proceeded to increase in violence; and the agents of the Duke of Burgundy had been still more active than ever in their secret manœuvres to inflame the popular discontent, and prepare the minds of the Parisians for immediate action, should any successful intrigue, or unexpected chance, afford the opportunity of delivering up the city to the Burgundian faction. Nor was it to be supposed that any treason against the royal authority was intended by the rebellion against the power of the Constable. The unfortunate Charles, although really beloved by his people, was regarded only as the regal puppet, the motions of which other hands were to direct; and, although the name of the king was too frequently forgotten in the cries of "Burgundy," or "Armagnac," yet the real question at issue was, whether it was Armagnac or Burgundy, who was to rule the land as the right hand of majesty.

The only body, meanwhile, that had ventured to make any stand against the Armagnac

authority, had been the university. At all times, in latter years, insolent and overbearing, it had resisted by open protestation, as well as by secret manœuvre, the attempts of the Constable to infringe upon its immunities and privileges, and more especially its right of self-jurisdiction, in any search for the ring-leaders of the riot which had so greatly excited the wrath of the Count, by the discomfiture of his mercenary men-at-arms. Bold in its power, and sure of the effect of its threats of open resistance, should the Constable persist in his design, the university had even refused to make inquiry into the cause of the riot, and punish the rebel scholars ; and this strong symptom of disaffection was the first that had yet assailed the authority of the Armagnac. His bitter disappointment at the positive refusal of the king to grant an ordinance for the suspension of the privileges of the university, had, consequently, greatly increased his bitterness of rage. The insolence of the students had also waxed greatly, from their consciousness of their triumph in the late riot ; and cries of “ Long live Bur-

"gundy!" had been proffered, open and unresisted, in the principal streets of the quarter beyond the Seine.

The middle classes, composed of the more well-doing citizens, cautious in their nature, but yet grumbling, as is their wont, had kept themselves, in general, quiet, and vented their discontent at home, in "curses not loud but deep." One portion of these classes, however, and by no means an unimportant one in those days—the guild of the butchers—had shown symptoms of tumult, although after a suppressed fashion, like the rumbling of distant thunder announcing a violent storm upon the horizon. The disappearance of Lambert, one of the not least influential members of the guild, and the mystery that still overhung his ultimate fate, after his arrest before his own house, had been adroitly used, by means best known probably to Master Jean Petit, the Carmelite, to inflame their minds to a state bordering upon open revolt. The spirits of these men, the very nature of whose trade rendered them obdurate, hardy, and accustomed to scenes of blood, had been more

violently excited, instead of being awed by terror into silence, by the probable fate of one of their fraternity. As to the dregs of the populace, they were ever ready for any active demonstration of force, no matter to what purpose: reckless, eager for scenes of tumult and violence, desirous of change; yet caring not what might be the change, that scarcely could amend, but certainly could not render worse, their miserable condition, they were prepared to shout, and scream, and fight in any cause, for the support of which their coarse, ignorant, and ferocious natures might be excited. Such was the inflammable state of the materials which composed the mass of the crowd that filled the great hall of the Hospital of the Trinity—materials that a spark might fire, and cause to burst into an explosion. No wonder, then, when the irritation of impatience in the delay of their pleasures in their saturnalia was added to the general spirit of fermentation, that the discontent of the crowd should begin to be loudly and tumultuously expressed.

It was about the estrade that some of the noisiest groups were congregated.

“Heugh! heugh!” coughed an old artisan; “the breath is squeezed out of my body. We are pressed here like herrings in a cask, while court and courtiers will have it at their ease on the platform. And yet I should like to know where are the better and honester men of the two. Things can’t go on after this damnable fashion long.”

“Not content with starving the people,” croaked another hoarsely, “the Constable would suffocate them into the bargain, by keeping us waiting; for it is he who has our poor king in leading-strings, and makes him come and go at will: more shame for him. To the Seine with the Constable!”

“Down with the Constable!” screamed the voice of an old woman close by.

“Down with the Constable!” echoed a score of voices.

“Yes, down with the Constable,” pursued the old woman, known to many as Mother Jehanne the devineress, “who allows us to be trampled to the earth like vile clay or clods of dirt, and then says, ‘Go, work, my worthy friends, and

hold your peace; and, if ye die of hunger, ye may go to the devil with the satisfaction of wanting nothing more.'”

“To the Seine, to the Seine with the Constable!” was shouted again.

The men-at-arms around the estrade looked pale, and banged their halberd ends upon the pavement by way of remonstrance: their force was nothing in the face of the people's saturnalia.

“One!” said to himself a ruffian-looking fellow, whose ragged attire might have led to the supposition that he was a common *truand*; and with one sharp dark eye he glared upon Mother Jehanne: the other eye was concealed by a great black patch; and a quantity of disorderly black hair nearly covered his face.

“Hearest thou the rabble, Bourdon?” said Dame Pernelle, pinching her husband's arm. “The morality must indeed be marvellous to see, that I should don my finest bravery to be pushed and squeezed, and have to listen to such vile discourse.”

“Of a truth, fair neighbour,” observed Master

Cocardas, who was ogling the ample charms of Dame Pernelle, for want of better occupation, "our fine senses are most unagreeably assailed by closer contact with such unodoriferous specimens of the male creation."

"Fie on the rabble!" repeated Dame Pernelle, with an encouraging glance at the dapper barber.

"Peace, wife," broke in the mercer; "they are not wrong. Whether they murmur low, or clamour loud, truth is truth: the Constable has brought us to a fine pass; and matters cannot long last thus."

Cocardas shrugged his shoulders, and exchanged glances with the dame.

"No, no: things cannot last thus," echoed several citizens, who formed a group about their gossip the mercer.

"Two!" repeated the seeming *truand*, turning his sharp eye upon Bourdon.

"I tell you they must have murdered brother Lambert," harangued a sturdy butcher, forming one of a group close by, which had long been fermenting angrily: "and if that be the case, the whole guild of butchers has been affronted

in his person : but we will have vengeance, will we not, my friends ?”

“ Yes, blood for blood !” exclaimed another truculent looking fellow, with broad shoulders, and a rugged face overcharged with colour.

“ True, master Caboché,” cried a third, “ blood for blood ! — that’s a true Christian maxim.”

“ Let us be stirring, then, my friends,” said Caboché. “ I have all the bold skinners and flayers at my back : we will see what my good axe will effect to avenge Lambert, our brother. By the horns of the devil, it shall do as sturdy work as if the great butchery of the Châtelet were not closed by those hounds of Armagnac, and it were grand slaughter-day.”

“ Ay ! ay !” cried another ; “ and they have injured us by closing the butchery of the Louvre also, and increasing the taxes until we are ground to the dust.”

“ But the Duke of Burgundy, masters, has promised to render us all our franchises, and reestablish the ancient privileges of our corporation,” insinuated another.

“Axe in hand for the Duke of Burgundy, then,” exclaimed Caboche.

“Long live Burgundy! and down with Armagnac!” shouted the butchers.

The men-at-arms looked still more discomfited, and banged their halberd-ends in vain.

“Three!” muttered the individual with the dirty streaming black hair; and now his eye was fixed upon Caboche.

“They say,” said a fair-haired youth among a neighbouring knot of students, “that ‘the devil in man’s hide’ will beg an ordinance of the king to suspend our university privileges and immunities. I have it from the best authority.”

“*Diabolus iste!*” exclaimed the grey-headed old boy of the Rue St. Jacques; “we’ll poke his own horns down his throat. *Sua cornua vorabit!*”

“We’ll show him what the bold boys of the university can do!” screamed another.

“And we’ll lick him *propriâ personâ*, as we have done his mercenaries,” proffered the old boy, “*vi et rapieris: et Constabolum istum deridebimus ad barbam.*”

“Four!” murmured the counter of the chief malcontents.

“Five!” he added, as his piercing eye fell upon the form of a stout Carmelite, who had mingled among the students, and might have been supposed to have aided in exciting their murmurs. The person of Brother Abdias seemed to be known to him as one on whom his suspicions had been already fixed.

“What’s that fellow muttering?” exclaimed the fair-headed youth; “he is not one of our friends from the Cour des Miracles. A spy! a spy!”

“A spy of the Armagnac!” cried several of the students. “To the Seine with the spy! death to the spy!”

But the suspected spy had contrived, in spite of the crowd, to retreat out of reach of the scholars, before any violence could be offered to him. He edged his way back among the multitude, without, however, removing to any distance from the royal platform. Suddenly he stopped, and remained fixed in the position he had gained: his eye had fallen upon a young man, who, with

bent head and gloomy brow, stood, with a strange looking boy by his side, not far from the estrade. He pulled his tangled hair more closely over his face, like a veil, and continued to observe the object of his attention incessantly.

Perrinet Leclerc, since his interview with Odette, and his escape from the Hôtel des Tournelles, had been a prey to the most conflicting feelings. The reproaches, and, above all, the solemn warnings of Odette, combined with his own consciousness that he had commenced to tread a path of evil which might lead to his own dishonour, had made a powerful impression upon his easily excitable but wavering spirit. The good impulse struggled with the evil violently within him, and was now fast obtaining the mastery. In spite of the violence of his temper, and the jealous doubts of Odette's faith, which still gnawed at his heart, her words had not failed of that influence which purity and truth command, and had produced a great reaction in his mind.

“Whatever be the risk, however,” he murmured to himself, “I must gaze on her beauti-

ful face again, read in her eyes the truth, and believe in woman's virtue or deny it for ever!"

Astaroth stood by, also absorbed, with discontented looks. The patience and the changed humour of his master suited not the temper of his savage mind.

Presently a friendly hand took that of Perrinet. He looked round and saw Yvon by his side.

"What news?" said the kloarek anxiously, in a low tone.

"I have seen her," was Perrinet's reply; "and I shall see her now once more: she comes hither probably." Yvon started, and dropped his friend's hand. "Thou shalt know all hereafter."

"What have you said to Yvon, Master Perrinet, that he should colour thus?" said pretty Mistress Lyonelle suspiciously. "You will teach him to be as brow-knitting a malcontent as yourself, with all your whisperings and dark mysteries every time you meet." And Lyonelle stuck out her under lip poutingly. "Thanks to good Yvon's adroitness, and the power of

my father's name, as limner of yon beautiful Paradise, we have got through the crowd thus far to a place where we can better see the diversion of the mystery and the wondrous decorations: and I will not let you spoil his and our pleasure by your wo-begone looks and gloomy voice: sooth to say, he is sad enough, as he is oftentimes, without your aid."

Thus saying, Lyonelle put out one hand, as if to take the support of Yvon's arm; but finding that the kloarek did not heed the movement, she tossed her head tetchily with a little hasty sigh, and clung fondly to the arm of her father, who stood on the other side.

The seeming *truand* watched the group, with an eye gleaming with the satisfaction of malice likely to be gratified.

Meanwhile the clamour grew wilder and wilder in the hall. The crowd waved more tumultuously to and fro. The cries of "Down with the Constable! *Sus* on Armagnac! We will complain to the king! Redress for our wrongs! Vengeance! Armagnac to the Seine!" increased into a general shout.

At the very moment when the presence of the court might have been supposed to have roused the inflammatory multitude to the last explosion of its discontent, the door at the back of the platform was opened ; and a loud voice announced “ Monseigneur the King ! ” Instead of increasing, the clamours of the crowd were in a moment hushed, as if by magic.

The deep and almost devout respect for royalty, peculiar to the time, was greatly increased, in the instance of Charles VI., by the love “ akin to pity,” and arising from that feeling which the people generally bore him. It was the first time he had appeared in public for a great length of time, during which his reason had been still more shattered than before ; and now the poor martyr came among them not only as a spectator, but as himself a show, and a “ morality,”—the chief and miserable actor in the “ mystery ” of royalty. For some moments, as Charles came forward, king and people gazed silently on one another, and seemed to have for one another the deepest sympathy and pity. The king saw his people

—miserable and poor. The people looked face to face upon their king, whom they knew to be more miserable, and poorer still—poor upon his throne—poor in spirit—poor in friends—neglected and deserted by his wife and nearest relations—an old child, without father or mother to bestow their fostering care upon him.

Respect, pity, admiration, curiosity, and a genuine joy at seeing their king once more before them and restored to reason, however feeble in health, calmed down at once the angry feeling, even in spite of the presence of the Constable, on whom no eyes looked, on whom no thoughts were any longer directed, as he entered, stern, proud, and frowning, angered probably by the exclamations, that could not have failed to reach his ears as the door opened.

As Charles advanced to the edge of the platform, he stood for a moment deeply moved. He then stretched forth his arms as if to give a blessing to all those around him.

“Noël! Noël!” shouted the populace, clapping their hands, with that cry of joy and acclamation peculiar to the French people of the age.

The king sat down, overcome by his feelings. The dauphin took his place upon one of the stools on his right hand ; and the Constable bent his looks once more angrily on the crowd, before he seated himself on the other side. Behind stood Tanneguy Duchâtel, the Chancellor de Marle, in his sweeping robes ; the Bishop of Contance, in his imposing ecclesiastical attire ; and several others of the nobles, who still lingered about the court of the deserted monarch, or filled the functions of the state. Juvenal des Ursins, with a deputation of citizens, filled up the greater part of the rest of the platform : and behind, in obedience to a sign from Armagnac, appeared the forms of armed soldiery. But even this demonstration did not again excite the multitude, absorbed as it was in the contemplation of the king.

“ Noël ! Noël ! ” cried the crowd again, when the monarch was seated.

The king looked round with a faint smile, as if seeking some one he saw not. Presently advanced to his side a beautiful fair-haired girl, in whom Bourdon and his wife recognised Odette,

—perhaps not a little to the envy and jealousy of her aunt. The king looked for a seat, but there was none. The fair girl, however, although awed by the crowd, and trembling, smiled with her pure angelic smile at her royal patient, and seated herself upon the platform by the side of the chair.

“It is she who has restored Monseigneur the King to reason, they say!” “It is an angel!” “It is the beauteous Lys d’Ange!—the Lily of Paris!” was murmured among the crowd.

“Noël! Noël for the Lily of Paris!” was cried. “Noël for Lys d’Ange!”

“Noël! Noël!” repeated the whole assembly, with a clapping of hands.

The heart of Perrinet beat tumultuously. Was it with pride in the demonstration of honour bestowed on her he loved? Suddenly, however, it stopped, as if pierced with a dagger’s blow. The dauphin had gazed aside upon the beautiful girl, who, with eyes cast down, sat almost at his feet.

CHAPTER V.

THE MYSTERY.

The actors are at hand ; and by their show
You shall know all that you are like to know.

SHAKSPEARE.

You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting,
With most admired disorder.

IBID.

BEFORE the crowd assembled in the Hall of the Trinity had time to work itself up once more to that frame of mind which had threatened a general outbreak upon the entrance of the king, the signal had been given for the commencement of the mystery. True, when the first movement of joy and the curiosity had in some degree subsided, men began to look into each other's faces, as if to ask how it was that they had allowed themselves thus suddenly to be awed into the attitude of submission and respect ; and a low murmur of discontent, communicated only in hoarse whispers, began

again to be audible, like the faint simmering of water, which, after having been once removed from the fire, again begins to boil. But the prospect of the commencement of the promised drama again absorbed the attention of a great part of the audience, by directing it to the stage. Curiosity, and the fondness which the Parisians have ever evinced for theatrical representations, even from the very infancy of the dramatic art, were powerful motives of restraint: and, from the very same assembly which had been almost unanimous in its previous tumult and clamour, many a "hush" now arose, to recall the murmurers to order. The impatience, which had been one of the most irritating incitements to the general discontent, was now about to be satisfied.

In fact, the rumbling tones of the organ were heard from behind the stage; and the invisible chorus of the quarrelsome little chorister boys produced a very wonderful effect, although the strain of this symphony bordered no little on the lugubrious, and several voices quavered out of tune with a freedom worthy of the golden

age. But those were not times when audiences were hypercritical. On the contrary, the murmur of applause was very general, and waxed louder, when during this operatic display the curtains adorning the back scenes of the uppermost and lowermost regions were lifted up, and, one by one, several important personages made their appearance upon the stage. The black gentlemen, rejoicing in the horns and the long tails, which were now allowed to sweep the floor in dignified state, ranged themselves in order of rank—the biggest with the best known name of the infernal hierarchy in the centre, and in a straight row across the stage, with that utter disregard for the art of stage-grouping, which may still be found in its primitive simplicity in certain Italian opera-houses. But in spite of the wonderfully facetious grimaces which these dark gentlemen—whose parts were enacted by the comic members of the troop, after the same traditional but incomprehensible system by which the witches in “Macbeth” on our stage are represented by low-comedy actors—endeavoured to excite the risible muscles of the

audience, the general attention was far more attracted by the glittering braveries of the personages who entered in the upper compartment. Such finery had never been seen before. "Dresses" as well as "scenery and decorations," if not new, were, at all events, produced "for the first time," and perhaps "for that occasion only." After profoundly saluting the audience with three bows—a courtesy also very systematically displayed by those beings below, in whom courtesy might not have been supposed to be an amiable weakness—the principal occupiers of good Jacquemin Gringonneur's wonderfully devised Paradise sat down, the personage in the long white beard filling the great arm-chair, as was his due, and having on his left hand the well shaven gambling scholar in his fine brocaded gown, and on his right another individual in male attire no less glittering, and with a still more splendid glory upon the top of his cap, each on his stool; while the little boy with the new wings, whose unlucky appetite for gingerbread had caused him to look so woful, was seated demurely on the footstool. Behind these personages were ranged

in decorous and symmetrical semicircle, no less stiffly than the opera-house choruses already alluded to, a goodly show of white-attired individuals, upon all of whose faces not so much of the barber's care had been bestowed as upon the brocaded scholar's; but choruses have, as is well known, always the right to call for a greater stretch of the imagination, to preserve an illusion, than the principal actors.

When all was arranged in due and solemn order, the lugubrious overture ceased; and the mystery commenced by a sort of prologue, or exposition, in which both upper and lower regions took part, the upper house making the longest speeches, and the lower those most full of point and merriment. Sometimes the chief orator in the lower house turned up his head over the edge of his compartment, and apostrophized those above in no very decent or measured terms: and then some one of the principal personages above rose, and, leaning over the edge of the paradise, thundered anathemas or uttered moralities to those below, without, however, producing in general any more edifying effect

than a quantity of grimacing gestures of disrespect from the low-comedy actors in the lower region. But now the curtains of the earth were opened ; and the “cruel tyrant Domitian” with the gigantic sabre entered, followed by his agents and acolytes, wearing visages scarcely less truculent than his own ; and in verses savouring of “King Cambyzes’ vein,” that seemed interminable, the wicked man informed his attendants that Monseigneur Saint John was preaching to the people at Ephesus, and that they must embark at Rome to go and seize him. After a due space of time, and a sufficient quantity of verses, the whole party stepped gallantly over the blue stripes, and ranged themselves rather crowdedly, some of them having their feet in the sea, behind the beautiful representation of the boat ; and all this, sooth to say, was wonderfully interesting to the audience.

Thus far the performance proceeded unencumbered, and to the edification of the “faithful.” The author of the “highly diverting mystery” had here written down upon his libretto, “*Ici entre en la nef, et pendant navi-*

gation parleront enfer et paradis." In truth, during the supposed voyage of Domitian and his agents to Ephesus, Satan, Lucifer, and Beelzebub, declared themselves in fits of gaiety at the prospect of a persecution of the saint; but when it came to the turn of "Paradise" to speak, there happened to be certain verses "set down," in which Domitian was apostrophized as a remorseless persecutor of the people—an oppressor of the poor—a bloody-minded tyrant—whose lot was cast among those tenants of the lower region who rejoiced so loudly in his cruelty. How far any inuendo with regard to the political circumstances of the times was intended by these words, never can be known; although there were many who afterwards asserted that the author of the morality had been seen to enter, on the previous day, the Monastery of the Carmelites, and had been supposed to have been for some time closeted with Master Jean Petit. Be that as it may, allusions are easily seized by popular crowds, and by none sooner than by the excitable people of France. At the moment when heaven announced among

what society the lot of the "tyrant" was cast, a sturdy voice from the middle of the hall called out, "Yes, let the devil in man's hide go to his own."

The mention of this well-known nick-name of the Constable operated like a spark of fire in a powder cask. The pent-up elements all on a sudden burst forth: the explosion took place.

"To his own, the devil in man's hide!" was repeated by a hundred voices.

"Yes! yes!" exclaimed a hundred others, giving a direct name to the nameless, "Down with Armagnac! down with the Constable!"

"Vengeance! redress for our sufferings! away with him! bread! bread! no taxes! down with Armagnac and his bloody mercenaries!" were among the many cries that suddenly burst forth.

Respect for royalty was at once forgotten. That strange electric blow of simultaneous impulse, which often runs through a whole crowd with irresistible force, passed over all at the same moment, like a sudden flash of lightning. In the midst of this outbreak of clamour the mystery was interrupted. The actors grew

pale, even through their coarse rouge ; the Holy Mother grasped at her side as if to seek a rapier, and found none : the very devils, good citizens as they were, trembled in their dark skins, with a wonderful agitation of their tails.

The eyes of the Constable flashed with rage as he bent his heavy brows indignantly upon the crowd. His first impulse was to rise and call an officer to his side, with that habit of supreme command, assumed during the long inability of the king himself to 'govern : his next movement was to bend his head gloomingly to the monarch, as if to ask for his full powers to act in a repressive manner upon the rebellious multitude.

The first impression upon the still weak brain of the king was one of bewilderment. He dropped his arms on either side of his chair, and gazed upon the tumult like one stupified. The discontent of the people had been carefully kept from his knowledge ; and, although he was aware that misery and suffering enough existed in the city of Paris, for which his first care and thought, on recovering his reason, had been to

seek a remedy, the aspect of this spirit of revolt, that broke forth under an excess of injury of which he was ignorant, struck him like an unexpected clap of thunder—he had not conceived it possible that the audacity of the people could be driven to go thus far.

He was startled from this momentary trance by the touch of a soft hand that took one of his own. On looking down he saw the beautiful face of Odette gazing with trembling anxiety at his.

“Fear not, my child,” he said; “my people are rude in their expressions, but this cannot be earnest. Calm thee—they will not harm thee.”

“I fear not for myself, my lord the king,” murmured Odette, “provided that no harm come to your sacred person—that this tumult press not on your brain. Oh! they are cruel—cruel!”

“Fear nought, I myself am calm,” replied the king, pressing her hand.

“Your orders, Sire, that my troops may expulse these traitors from the hall,” said Armagnac hastily.

“What have you done to my poor people, cousin,” said Charles, with a mixture of sorrow and anger in his voice, “that they should be necessitated to clamour thus angrily in our presence? I have confided them as children to your care: How have you tended them? I have committed them to your hands: Have those hands been employed but to press and torture them?”

“Sire,” replied the Constable with bent brow, “this is no time for accusation or reproach. They roar like an angry sea that threatens to invade your very throne. This traitorous tumult must be repressed by force. Let the base villains who insult not only your royal person, but our holy and blessed religion—the Holy Virgin stand by us!—by this unseemly interruption of the pious mystery, be swept from hence, and I will listen humbly to your royal words. But now let your first care be to punish them for this vile indignity. Your orders, Sire, your orders.”

The people, who looked on this colloquy at a distance, and marked the manner of the king,

still shouted for redress and vengeance on the Constable.

“No—no!” exclaimed the king sternly, although in considerable agitation. “They shall not be harmed, I tell you, cousin. They suffer; and they murmur: and how should they not murmur when they suffer? My poor people! my poor people! Come hither,” he said, turning. “Not thou, my hasty boy,” he added to the dauphin, who had sprung up and stood nearly before his royal father with drawn sword—“not thou.—Back, I tell thee: they will not harm me. No—you, Juvenal, my good provost—speak to them; for I have not the force. Tell them they shall have redress for all their wrongs, for all their grievances. Let them come to you—to me—in my palace, if they will. I will hear them. I will find remedies for their sufferings. Means shall be found. I will work day and night for it; my orders shall be executed for the disposal of the last royal treasure. Tell them this—tell them all.”

The dauphin, upon another sign from his father, fell back: and Juvenal des Ursins, the

provost, advanced to the edge of the platform. Charles himself stretched forth his arm to command silence; and a comparative calm was quickly established.

“Hear him—hear the provost!” was now the general cry.

In a stately and somewhat long-winded harangue, the pedantic provost announced the declarations of the king to the people, in terms less heartfelt and full of genuine love, perhaps, but still not without their due effect. A general murmur, but a murmur of applause, again arose. “Noël! Noël for our good king!” was now the shout; and the clapping of hands continued long and loud. Several still growled and expostulated, it is true; but the far greater majority was once more changed in its humour.

When Odette again received a kindly smile from the king, she saw that his eyes were filled with tears.

Upon a sign from the provost, the mystery was directed again to be resumed. The actors once more began to spout their pious speeches, although some seemed to have lost their

memory in the tumult. Monseigneur Saint John now entered upon the scene of action—the intermediate stage being now supposed to represent the city of Ephesus; of which fact the saint himself took care to make the audience aware, in a sermon of some three hundred verses, which he pronounced without being troubled by any presentiment that the tyrant and his agents—who were standing, however, before his very eyes in the boat—were on their way to seize him, throw him into chains, and drag him a prisoner to Rome.

The mystery then again proceeded. Frowning and dark, boiling with internal rage, the Constable sat plucking angrily at his grizzled beard. Some little time had elapsed, when an officer of his guard approached him, and bending forward on his left side, spoke to him in a low tone of voice and showed him a small golden cross.

“It was a one-eyed man, so ragged in attire and so villainous in appearance, who brought this token,” pursued the officer in a whisper, “that I had refused to do his bidding in troubling your Seigneurie, had I not known that

Monseigneur the Constable is accustomed to employ agents whose outward show would not always seem to justify—”

“Enough!” interrupted Armagnac, “I know him. What said he?”

“That those whom Monseigneur the Constable requires at his hands are here,” replied the officer; “that with a few armed men their arrest might be effected: he would point them out.”

“Hush! not so loud!” said Armagnac, glancing his eyes anxiously at the king, who sat, however, absorbed in the contemplation of the mystery. “Let it be done! Take your own men, Messire D’Estignac; follow that man’s directions. Ye may enter the hall by the corridors and the door behind the scaffolding of the moralities. But wait, if it be practicable, until these fellows shall have finished to mouth forth their long-winded mystery. The saints forbid that their pious exercise should be again disturbed—unless needs must be! And then down on the traitors, D’Estignac: fail not of their capture—Go!”

The officer bowed and retired. Such orders were too common in those days to excite the least surprise.

The Constable raised his head with a look of greater satisfaction on his gloomy brow than he had worn as yet; and he even rubbed his hands complacently.

The mystery meanwhile still went on. The tyrant and his agents had seized the saint, and were supposed to be again crossing the seas back to Rome. Some disturbance only took place upon the entry of the officer and the men-at-arms at the upper end of the hall, and the efforts they made to work their way downwards to the point they desired to reach: a considerable murmur arose against the mercenary "hounds of the Armagnac," but this confusion was only partial.

At length the morality drew to a close. Powers infernal and powers divine had duly intervened, by means of the step-ladders already described, in the affairs of the earth, to the discomfiture of the "cruel tyrant," and the glory of the saint: and moral discourses, full of all the

flowers of rhetoric and the stiff beauties of allegorical poetry, in which the members of the upper house had severely rated those of the lower, had formed a sort of epilogue, which closed the "highly diverting and right marvellous" drama, according to the best known rules of art. The crowd again cried "Noël!" and applauded. But, with the gratification of curiosity and the termination of the pleasure, began again [the murmur of discontent. The king, however, rose from his seat, and again stretched forth his arms to his people: and the provost begged them to disperse, with the assurance that their complaints should be heard and their wrongs redressed.

The king had turned to leave the hall, when suddenly a shout and a clamour arose, which was quickly followed by a yell from the greater part of the multitude, and a great waving to and fro and struggling of the mass.

Charles looked round. Towards the centre of the hall, not far from the platform, was the chief movement of the tumult. In the midst of an encircling force of men-at-arms were two

young men, one of whom was furiously, but vainly, resisting his arrest. Already some of the soldiers had forced him to the ground, and were dragging him, spite of the efforts of a frantic youth for his release, towards the upper end of the hall: the others were endeavouring to drive back the multitude, infuriated at this act of aggression, and pressing violently upon them; many were hewn down by the men-at-arms, or severely wounded. The centre space of the hall was, in an instant, the scene of the tumult of battle: and cries and groans from this quarter mingled discordantly with the general yell.

The king grew very pale, and trembled with agitation and excitement. He stretched forth a shaking hand and cried "Forbear!" but his voice was feeble and unheard. He could do no more than clench his fingers with a nervous and convulsive movement. In vain the Constable entreated "Monseigneur the King" to leave the hall, and not trouble himself about the necessary arrest of a few malefactors and traitors. The unhappy monarch looked at him with an air of

severe and bitter reproach, but without speaking: he was evidently struggling violently with his feelings, without being able to utter the words that seemed to choke him.

“Down with the hounds of the tyrant! Down with Armagnac!” shouted the crowd.

And now came all at once the cry, “And long live Burgundy!”

The Constable, in his turn, grew livid with rage.

“Hear you that?” exclaimed the king at last. “They cry ‘Long live Burgundy!’—long live the assassin of my unhappy brother Louis. They would rather the assassin should wield the sword of power than the tyrant. Bernard! Bernard! thou hast much to answer for, before thy king and before thy God. My people!”

The excited king stretched forth his hand as if to command that the men-at-arms should be recalled; but his feelings again choked him; his eyes stared, and foam was on his lips. Suddenly his head sank upon his breast. He tottered. Armagnac sprang forward; but the dauphin caught his father as he fell. He had

fainted. At his feet knelt Odette clasping his pendant hand with a look of utter misery.

The king was conveyed into the ante-room behind the entrance to the estrade. More men-at-arms had arrived to the assistance of their comrades. The skirmish still continued in the hall of the Trinity: but the greater part of the crowd had been already driven into the street; women and children shrieking, and men cursing and howling. As to the actors of the mystery, all the powers, heavenly or infernal, saints and angels, and devils and tyrants, had fled at the first onset, either to their sanctuary beneath the stage, or by the back door.

Master Cocardas, the dapper barber, had very ungallantly refused his protection to the buxom Dame Pernelle, who was fain to acknowledge that husbands may sometimes be useful domestic articles, and had ensconced himself with very pale face and trembling legs behind a pillar. He started, as a ragged fellow with a patch over one eye came near him; and he begged for mercy. Perhaps in another moment he had cried "Down with Armagnac!" also, with the

most zealous malcontent: but at the same instant the spy removed his patch.

“Master Cleofas!” said the barber.

“That hated fellow is in the hands of the Constable,” said the spy with a grim smile of malice.

“Perrinet Leclerc?” asked Cocardas, with a look of satisfaction.

“Perrinet Leclerc,” answered Cleofas fiercely; “and Armagnac will pay me off that fellow’s insolence. Let him escape now, if he can! his doom is fixed.”

CHAPTER VII.

THE PRISONERS.

Thou ice that sitt'st about *his* heart !
No heat can ever thaw thee !

FORD.

This quarrel may draw blood another day.

SHAKSPEARE.

ADJOINING the ante-room that gave admittance on one side to the great hall of the Trinity, was a small cell, prepared by the brethren of the Holy Passion, for the repose and refreshment of the king ; and into this room the fainting invalid was carried.

Master Guillaume d'Hersilly, the physician, who was in attendance, applied such remedies as were at hand, for the recovery of the king. By the side of the couch on which he lay knelt Odette ; and over the recumbent form of his father bent the dauphin, who, in spite of his anxiety, glanced ever and anon at the beauteous form of the fair girl, absorbed in her sorrow

and uneasiness. Since their last interview in Odette's chamber, the young prince had not addressed her; but, in spite of his newly-awakened jealousy, his better feelings towards her and his ardent passion had not ceased to combat his sense of the deceit he conceived she had purposely practised on him. The sight of her devoted attachment to his suffering father, the contemplation of her beauty, and above all the charm of that sort of halo of purity and truth that pervaded her whole being, now contributed powerfully to dispel his bitterer feelings, and to fan up again the flame of love: and thus, though it was still with a mournful air of reproach that he looked upon her, yet the revulsion of his feelings only served to augment, instead of diminishing his passion. He felt that he could have renounced his royal heritage to obtain an explanation from her that would remove his doubts.

Presently the king moved and opened his eyes. For a time they stared wildly about him, until, as they fell upon Odette, his senses seemed fully to return. He smiled, and stretched forth.

his hand to take hers. The tears began to fall silently down the cheeks of the afflicted girl.

“Odette, why dost thou weep, my child?” said the king softly.

“If I weep, it is with joy that my lord the king is better now,” she answered.

“Have I been ill?” pursued Charles; “What is this? Where am I? Ah! I remember me—the tumult—the clamouring crowd—the Constable! What has been done? I must look to this—my people must not thus be harassed.” He attempted to rise from his couch.

“Sire,” said the physician, gently holding him back, “it is my duty to constrain you not to rise—you need further repose. In your present state of weakness any exertion might produce disastrous consequences.”

“Messire d’Hersilly,” said Charles in an excited manner, sitting up, “a crowned king has duties that such considerations should not lead him to forget.”

“Tell me your will, my father,” said the dauphin, interposing, “and I will execute it. Calm your flurried spirits.”

“No, Charlot, no, my boy,” answered the king; “myself—I must see to this.”

The physician made a supplicating sign to Odette.

“My lord the king,” said the fair girl, rising and approaching Charles with her calm angelic smile, “has promised obedience to his nurse and guardian—and she bids him still repose. Besides, all tumult is now gone by; all is at peace.”

“But how?” murmured Charles faintly, giving way to her influence.

“When your spirit shall be soothed by rest, my king,” said Odette evasively, “then you may think upon the past, and on the future—but not now—not now.”

The king sighed, smiled at Odette, and fell back upon his couch: his eyes were still fixed eagerly upon the bright being who exercised so powerful and calming an influence upon his mind.

The physician, fearing any further excitement, made another sign of entreaty to the dauphin and Odette to leave the room.

“Do not go—do not leave me, Odette,” murmured the king: “all is darkness when thou art not there, my child.”

“I will be at hand to greet my lord the king when his eyes again open—but he must close them now,” answered Odette.

The king obeyed. In a few minutes afterwards he had fallen into one of those fitful and irregular slumbers that were a characteristic of his malady.

As Odette passed with the dauphin out of the door, the young prince took her hand, and murmured in her ear, “Odette, Lys d’Ange, thou art indeed no being of the earth, or of the earthly.”

Odette trembled and blushed deeply.

The ante-room was crowded with the followers in the royal train, the deputation of citizens attendant upon the provost, the officers of the Constable’s guard, and the unhappy mummers in the “mystery,” in their fantastic dresses, who from the upper part of the hall had no other means of escape than by a corridor leading to the same part of the building; it was a con-

fused and motley assembly. In the midst, proud, stern, and cold, with the angry cloud upon his brow, revealing the storm of passion still passing within him, stood the relentless object of all the clamour of hatred, the cause of all the riotous tumult, Bernard, Count d'Armagnac, Constable of France. Far from yielding to these symptoms of rebellion, he seemed, from the knit of his brow and the angry expression of his eyes, to be revolving in his mind new projects of vengeance against the disorderly citizens of Paris; and it was only with brief answers, intermingled with a few hasty orders, that he replied to any questions or remarks that were put to him. He felt that he was master still.

At the same moment that Odette entered with the dauphin, a movement took place on the opposite side of the room. The prisoners taken by command of the Constable were being brought in from the corridor to await his orders: they were two, whom the officer in command reported to the Constable as having been pointed out to him as ringleaders of the late riot in the Rue St.

Jacques ; a ferocious lad, he said, had also been with them, but had contrived to make his escape with the agility of a wild beast, and had been lost among the crowd of combatants.

In the midst of the men-at-arms was Perrinet, his arms tightly bound behind him : his face was still flushed by his late resistance, and there was an air of bold and dogged resolution, mixed with more angry feelings, upon his physiognomy. By his side was Yvon, unbound : he, on the contrary, was very pale, and looked around him timidly, with his head sunk between his shoulders ; but the expression in his tender, although homely face, was rather one of conscious innocence and mild reproach, than of anger or of fear.

As the eyes of Perrinet fell upon the blushing girl, whose hand was still, for an instant, held by the young prince, he started forward with an angry exclamation ; but, when pulled back violently by the men-at-arms, he muttered a low curse, and, retreating as much as he was able, seemed willing to conceal himself among the guards who surrounded him. He cast his eyes down, as though he were as anxious not to

witness what was passing before him as not to be seen himself. Before Odette had raised her eyes from the ground he was partially hidden by the crowd; she was ignorant of his presence.

As soon as the dauphin had announced that his royal father had recovered from the fit of weakness into which the tumult around him had caused him to fall, and, after a proper period of repose, would probably not feel any injurious effects from his violent emotion, the Constable gave orders that the prisoners should be immediately removed to a place of security, to await examination and punishment. The dauphin offered a slight expostulation, upon the plea that it were better the king's will should be known in this matter; but the imperious Count, declaring that it was advisable to avoid any scenes harassing to the king's mind, was about to repeat his command, when a young girl, with an expression of terror and supplication upon her handsome face, contrived to burst through the crowd from the corridor, and to fling herself at the feet of Odette. She was accompanied by a spare, grey-

haired old man, who appeared to be in vain endeavouring to restrain her.

“ Oh ! plead for him, Madam, plead for him ! ” said Lyonelle, stretching forth her hands to the fair being, who looked, indeed, like an angel sent upon earth to heal all sufferings and relieve all wrongs. “ You can prevail much, they say, over the spirit of our lord the king. Speak for him ! let him be set free ! He is innocent—he has never done any mortal being harm—he is incapable of doing any harm. I could lay my life down in pledge of his innocence. Oh, plead for him ! let him go free ! ”

“ Of whom speak you, my good damsel ? ” said Odette, in vain endeavouring to raise Lyonelle from her feet : “ oh ! kneel not to me ! kneel not to a poor humble maid like me ! ”

“ Of him, of him ! ” sobbed Lyonelle, stretching out her arm towards Yvon, without rising. “ They have seized him—I scarce know why—they spoke of treason—riot. They drag him to prison—to death, perhaps. But his pure mind never harboured a thought of treason, I will be sworn—his gentle spirit never, never has been

moved to riot or bloodshed, believe me. 'Tis false! They lie! He has done no wrong! Save him—save him!” and she clung to the skirts of Odette’s garment.

“Appeal to *him*, poor girl,” said Odette, pointing to Armagnac. “You are in presence of the Constable of France. He will heed your tale, and, when he knows all, will doubtless set him free. Poor girl! poor girl! soothe thee!” and she passed her pure white hand over Lyonelle’s luxuriant black curls. “My lord Count,” she added, timidly, to the Constable, who had repeated his order for the removal of the prisoners, “will deign, I doubt not, to hear the proofs that yonder youth is innocent of all guilt, before he allows him to be dragged to prison.”

“The fair Odette,” replied Armagnac, sternly, “would do well to heed her duties about the person of her lord the king solely, and not interfere in matters of state policy.”

“You hear him,” sobbed Lyonelle. “Not to him can I plead, but to you, maiden. You will find favour in the king’s ear—save him!”

"He is your lover, maiden?" asked Odette, deeply moved.

"No, no;" stammered Lyonelle, hanging down her head.

"Your brother, then?"

"No," replied the unhappy girl, again.

"You love him, though?" said Odette.

Lyonelle gave no answer; but she buried her face in the dress of Odette, and sobbed hysterically. A new feeling seemed suddenly to arise in Yvon's breast. He had looked on with wonder and emotion at the earnestness of Lyonelle's supplication; and now he clasped his hand tightly to his bosom, as if to repress an agitation too tumultuous to bear—too new to understand. He gazed with emotion upon Lyonelle; and his eyes, too, filled with tears. The poor kloarek felt, although as yet he rendered no account of the feeling to himself, that he was loved.

"Rise, I entreat you, maiden," said Odette; and Lyonelle, rising, flung herself, after a passionate and troubled look at Yvon, into her father's arms, weeping aloud.

“ My lord the Constable,” continued Odette, advancing with that dignified air of self-possession, which contributed so greatly to her appearance of being a creature of a purer world, “ you say rightly. It is not the place of a poor maid like me, who am at most the very humblest instrument of Heaven’s high will on earth, to interfere in matters beyond my sphere, or dare to raise my weak voice against the power and authority of the great and noble, who are set on high to rule and to control. But as a suppliant I come before you—as a suppliant I entreat you to listen for a moment to the cry of distress, which you have heard like me, and which will find an echo in your bosom as in mine. As that poor girl has knelt to me unworthy, let me in turn kneel to you, the great, the powerful, and the just. Look on yonder youth, and judge yourself what harm he can have done the state : be just—be merciful—” and Odette attempted to kneel, while the Constable made an impatient gesture to wave her back.

“ Kneel not, Odette,” said the dauphin, lift-

ing her up from her half-suppliant attitude. "My valiant cousin of Armagnac will not refuse to listen, at my entreaty also, to your supplication in favour of this youth, since he interests you thus powerfully. He will grant him a brief examination at once in our presence, and, I doubt not, set him free."

"My gentle cousin," replied the Constable, "I have never sought to interrupt you in your princely pastimes; and I, in turn, crave your indulgence not to seek to thwart me in matters concerning the rule of this most unruly city."

The dauphin frowned with an abashed and embarrassed look, slightly shrugged his shoulders, and turned to address himself once more to Odette. Lyonelle had raised herself from her father's arms, and looked with anxious eagerness from one speaker to another. The colour had now heightened upon Yvon's cheek; and, forgetful of his own position, he gazed in embarrassment from the angelic being that was the object of his secret adoration, to the more earthly but scarcely less beauteous girl, who had pleaded with such heartfelt earnestness in his behalf,

and appeared to avow her love for him : the tumult of his mind was still too great, however, to enable him to analyze his own feelings.

Master Jean Petit, the Carmelite, who, as the confidant and the supposed agent of the Constable, was present in the midst of the followers of the court, now contrived to approach the ear of Armagnac and whisper low—

“ My Lord Count will surely not yield in this matter : these rebels must have an example before their eyes to terrify them into submission ; and the growing influence, methinks, of one, all too near the king’s person now, may threaten danger to influence more legitimate, be it not opposed and crushed.”

In thus speaking, the wily monk had two ends in view—the hope of driving the people to desperation and open resistance by another arbitrary arrest and punishment ; for he knew his Parisians better than the Constable who ruled them ;—and the removal of Odette, whom he now found by her truth and candour and simplicity of spirit to be more fatal to his interests than useful to them, from her constant attendance on the king.

“ Right, Master Jean Petit,” replied, in the same tone, the Constable, who from that morning had grown no less suspicious of an influence which was exerted in the cause of the country at large, and of humanity, rather than in that of Armagnac or of Burgundy ; “ an example is necessary : and, trust me, *her* task is done, *her* course is over. We will see to that also. This Lys d’Ange must return to the hand that gave her.”

“ My good cousin,” recommenced the dauphin, who, after a few words with the supplicating Odette, which racked the heart of the hidden Perrinet, again turned to the Constable, “ I cannot let this matter pass off thus ; there is evidently some mistake in the arrest of yonder poor youth and his companion. Enough has already been done to terrify them into submission, if there be rebel spirit in them. I speak—I have the best assurance—but the will of my king and father in demanding that they should be set at liberty.”

Before the imperious Constable could frame a reply to oppose the demand of the young prince, a sudden movement took place.

“From such hands will I accept no grace or favour,” exclaimed Perrinet with a loud voice, advancing from his concealment among the men-at-arms, with proud and dogged look. “Let me be dealt with as may be, from the mouth of Charles Dauphin of France will I receive no pardon or indulgence, even be it just: and from the Armagnac who should expect justice?”

Odette uttered an exclamation of surprise and dismay, and clasped her hands.

“Perrinet!” she cried, “imprudent—frantic!—”

The dauphin started back at this name: he looked from the dismayed girl to the young armourer, and seemed unresolved how to act. It was his rival, then, who was before him, and a prisoner! The consternation of the Carmelite was scarcely less than that of Odette: in the person of one of the prisoners, whose arrest and punishment he had urged for his own purposes, he discovered the man from whose personal connivance in his schemes he had so much to hope.

“Hear you, fair cousin, how these rebels

mouth it well?" exclaimed Armagnac, triumphantly: "and you would spare the traitorous villains!"

"Now, more than ever," replied the dauphin, generously; "what personal enmity may be expressed by yonder man it is my right to forgive; and that right I exercise. Once more I ask the immediate liberty of these prisoners."

"Generous youth!" murmured Odette, involuntarily casting a look of tender thankfulness upon the young prince.

"And I once more refuse every indulgence, that proceeds from the grace and favour of the dauphin of France!" exclaimed Perrinet, infuriated by that look.

"The fellow shall be spared the pains of his refusal," said the Constable, with a sneer; "for, craving our fair cousin's pardon, we shall persist more than ever in our design to keep in close hold the persons of citizens so dangerous. Let them be taken hence to the Châtelet forthwith."

"He is the friend of my childhood! Treat him not thus!" exclaimed Odette.

Perrinet replied to her intercession with a look of bitter reproach.

“But not Yvon—not Yvon!” cried Lyonelle, again falling on her knees. “He, at least, is innocent of all crime.”

“As Lieutenant-General of this realm, I demand—” began the dauphin, again.

“To the king, your father, noble prince, I am alone answerable for my deeds. Let them be taken hence,” interrupted the Constable.

“Be answerable, then, to thy king, my cousin, if thou hast aught to answer for. He is here. Why is again this strife?” exclaimed in a firm voice the king himself, who entered, unseen by all, at this juncture, followed by the physician. He was evidently still weak and very pale; but he wore that air of majesty which was so peculiarly his own in moments of emergency, when his kingly dignity was needed. Messire d’Hersilly was endeavouring to repress any excitement, that, in the precarious state of the monarch’s health, might prove dangerous; but Charles was not to be controlled.

“Is there not enough of treachery without,

and division within?" he said, after a pause; "must I hear words of contention, also, among those nearest to our royal person, and dearest to our hearts?"

"My royal father," said the dauphin, "I thought to be the instrument of your will in demanding of Monseigneur the Constable, here present, the release of yonder prisoners, whose capture was the cause of the late tumult. That one of them should refuse the grace I hoped to obtain," he added, "can change nothing, I am sure, in those intentions of which I sought to be the mouthpiece."

"Thou didst well, Charlot, my boy," replied the king, placing his hand on the shoulder of the dauphin. "My fair cousin," he continued to Armagnac, "I have placed thee upon high, above all—I have laid the weal of my kingdom within thy hands, that thou shouldest afford aid and protection to my people, not harass them with harsh and vigorous measures. I had hoped not to have urged this thought on thee again."

"My lord the king," said Armagnac, unabashed, "your royal hand has placed the

sword of power in my hand that it should be used—”

“But not misused, cousin,” interposed the king.

“And such has been the unruly state of your city of Paris,” continued the Constable, “that the imprisonment of such persons who may be denounced to me as ringleaders of treasonable riots, their most rigorous examination—even by every means of torture—in order to extort from them the names of their accomplices, and their summary punishment, are measures of the most imperative necessity. I deprecate your royal intercession in such matters, as dangerous to the safety of the state. I crave, on the contrary, once more the interference of your own royal power to repress and to restrain. Without the utmost rigour, we are lost.”

“Mildness and grace will soften hearts, my cousin,” replied Charles, with dignity, “when violence and tyranny will harden them.” Armagnac made a movement of impatience, and would have spoken ; but the king proceeded. “And, as touches these men, even have they been misguided and led astray to show openly a spirit of dissatisfaction and rebellion, let them go free—

let them tell among the people that their king can be merciful and forgive—let the people bless his name, and wait with patience and with hope his promise that their wrongs shall be redressed, their sufferings relieved. Let them go free. It is our will.”

Armagnac bit his grizzly moustache, and frowned sternly; but he did not attempt, for the moment, to show any opposition to this determined expression of the will of the king. The tears had risen to the eyes of the weak and suffering monarch; he sought, as usual, the countenance of Odette, and felt himself a thousandfold repaid by the expression of grateful satisfaction that gleamed athwart it. The Constable and the Carmelite monk exchanged glances expressive of their vexation at the encouragement sought by Charles in the fair being, whose sympathy and counsel seemed now to influence his every action; although the latter was internally much relieved in mind at the escape of the man upon whom he still fixed his eyes as his main instrument in furthering his schemes of treachery.

“Let them be set free at once,” resumed the

king, making a sign to the officer commanding the men-at-arms surrounding the prisoners. The arms of Perrinet were unbound. "And ye, who have been so misguided as to increase the evils and the sufferings of your fellow-citizens, and not to mitigate them, by inciting them to tumult and violence, forget not that your king suffers as much as ye, and pray to our blessed Lady that she give him strength to amend what is amiss in his unhappy city of Paris and in his distracted realm."

The varied and conflicting feelings that so confusedly filled the mind of Perrinet during the shifting incidents of the last few minutes, rendered him unable to pronounce a word. Timidity kept Yvon silent; he bowed his head, but attempted not to exculpate himself. But the ingenuous and quickly excitable mind of Lyonelle would not allow a shadow of doubt to rest upon the character of him she loved.

"But he is innocent—he is innocent," she exclaimed, pointing to Yvon.

"We will believe it, maiden," replied Charles with a smile.

“It was Yvon, who aided my father, here, Jacquemin Gringonneur, the goodly limner and illuminator, to paint those cards which he devised for the amusement of our lord the king,” pursued Lyonelle with glowing cheek; “and he loves our lord the king too well—he, poor Yvon, as well as my good father—to utter a word, to breathe a thought, much less to do an act, of treason.”

“Ah! yon good old man, your father, is the inventor of our pleasant cards?” said Charles kindly. “We would speak to him personally of his notable and genial devices, and find some better reward—although these be painful times for the show of royal bounty—for his kind thought of a poor solitary and unhappy king.”

Jacquemin bowed his head with a simple expression of thanks.

“The saints bless your kind devoted spirit!” said Odette to Lyonelle. “Happy should be he you love, in possessing such a heart. Cherish her, good youth,” she added to Yvon; “you love her, doubtless, as such a love as hers demands. May you be happy.”

Lyonelle cast down her eyes with a deep blush upon her face. The whole countenance of the poor kloarek was no less flushed. She whom he adored with a love such as men may bear to angels, now seemed to unite him to another. A new state of feeling, combined with many complicated emotions, made his heart throb painfully. Was it another and more earthly love that first began to arise within his bosom? He could not himself have told. The tumult of his mind in supposing that he *might* be loved—that love was possible towards such a being as himself—and loved by one so good, so sweet as Lyonelle, struggled strangely with that cherished but impossible passion which until then had filled his whole soul. But he knew not how—nor in truth did Lyonelle—somehow or other the hands of Yvon and Lyonelle had met. A new idea seemed also to have arisen in the mind of good Jacquemin Gringonneur. He looked from one to the other in wonder: but he smiled.

Meanwhile the king and all his party prepared to depart: but Odette had turned to look on Perrinet, who, with his eyes fixed on the ground

before him, stood as one confused in mind since his release.

“Perrinet!” she cried softly.

He did not stir.

“Perrinet!” she said again.

He at length raised his head and looked upon her with a mingled and doubtful expression.

“Farewell, my friend!” she said with her most softening smile of angel purity, “we shall meet again, and, our Holy Mother grant, in better times.”

Perrinet started forward; but Odette was now by the king’s side: close by her was the dauphin; and the lover stopped short with a heavy sigh.

The king and the attendant personages were now leaving the hospital of the Trinity. The Constable, before Charles entered his litter, requested that his personal services might be dispensed with, upon the plea of pressing business of state. The mingled crowd, that had been a witness in the anteroom to the scene which had passed, had already thronged into the street, but still Perrinet remained absorbed in his agitating emotions. His spirit had been softened, and

his projects of vengeance had begun to fade, before the mild presence, the dignified kindness, and the touching sympathy of the king; the affectionate smile and the last kindly words of Odette had also again sunk deeply into his heart, although all was as yet confused in his excitable mind; his better angel had again obtained the mastery. Yvon in vain entreated him to shake off this appearance of stupor, and come; while Lyonelle and her father, the former in a state of agitation which made her forget her usual pretty pettishness of impatience, awaited the kloarek. It was a rough and scornful voice that at length roused Perrinet from his trance. He started. The Constable again stood before him.

“Thou foul-mouthed rebel,” exclaimed Armagnac, “Charles, Dauphin of France, may pardon thee thy villain insolence, like a weak wavering boy, but Bernard of Armagnac knows neither weakness nor pardon. ‘Who shall expect justice of Armagnac?’ thou hast said. Thou thyself shalt taste of Armagnac’s justice, to mend thy manners and give thy

thought the lie. Justice thou shalt have for that same bold wagging of thy pestilential tongue. It is the will of our lord the king that thou shouldest go free; and heaven and the saints forefend that the Constable should dispute his will. Free shalt thou be; but he has put no tie upon me that I should not chastise thy rebel spirit; and we will see if thy freedom smart not somewhat. Forward, two men-at-arms!"

Two men advanced from the number of Armagnac's guard.

"Draw your swords!" commanded the Constable.

Lyonelle hid her face upon her father's bosom, while Yvon stretched forth his arms, as if with a vain endeavour to arrest the blow he fancied was about to fall. Perrinet, with the consciousness that all resistance was vain, stood dark and gloomy, but unmoved.

"Lay down your weapons," continued Armagnac, "and tell me ten good blows of your scabbards upon his villain shoulders."

"Monseigneur," cried Perrinet, drawing himself up proudly, "such is the punishment of a

common soldier: and, had I even merited punishment, I am no soldier to be treated thus."

"Do as I have commanded you," pursued the Constable.

"Reflect on what you do, Monseigneur," exclaimed Perrinet, his eyes beginning to gleam with fury.

"Ten blows, I said," said Armagnac with stern coldness; "not one more, not one less; and so applied that the fellow may for long days to come cease to doubt of Armagnac's justice."

"Monseigneur, Monseigneur," said Perrinet through his set teeth, "this is the punishment of a vassal or a serf, and I am neither the one nor the other. I am a free man, and a citizen of Paris."

"The nearer it touches thy rebel heart, the greater is the justice," said the Constable with a smile.

"Not to the king himself would I pardon so base an outrage," exclaimed the young armourer; "and I tell thee, Constable, I will rest nor day nor night, until I have avenged the degradation."

“The Constable defies thee, fool,” said Armagnac. “Do as I bid,” he pursued to the men-at-arms, “strip off his vest!”

“Mercy! mercy!” cried Lyonelle and her father.

“Monseigneur! monseigneur!” exclaimed Yvon piteously.

“Silence, rabble,” thundered the Constable, —“and thou, his associate, thank thy patron saint that thou taste not of my justice also; the sight, though, may be no bad lesson to thee. Would not one think the miserable crew held it for their right to dictate to the Constable of France? Strike!” he added to his men.

Perrinet raised his eyes and his clenched fists to heaven. But resistance was in vain. His vest was stripped from his back; two other men-at-arms forced him on his knees, while the first two laid their scabbards with heavy blows across his shoulders. The Constable himself counted the number coolly and deliberately; while close by stood Jacquemin, Lyonelle, and the kloarek, an afflicted and weeping group.

When Perrinet was allowed to rise, his face was livid, his eyes bloodshot, his teeth set, although his pale lips were apart.

“Dishonoured ! degraded !” he muttered.

His vest was flung to him ; and he threw it over his shoulder. His shirt was smeared behind with blood, where the last heavy blows had fallen ; and he staggered with pain and over-boiling feelings of shame, as with looks of rage and defiance he walked towards the door.

“Go, thou art free, rebel and agent of the Burgundian,” laughed the Constable. “Thou art free to tell among the people that Armagnac can be just, and that he can punish—to tell it, until terror tie the foul tongues of those who clamoured so rebelliously in yonder hall—to let them know that not a traitor shall exist in Paris who bears not on his back the blood-red cross of Burgundy, as bright and living as that thou bearest thyself.”

The hand of Perrinet grasped in vain for the hilt of his cutlass with his habitual gesture in moments of strong excitement ; his customary weapon had been removed at the time of his

arrest in the hall. Suddenly a thought seemed to strike him; a gleam of satisfaction passed over his face; he thrust his hand beneath his shirt, where his belt bound his waist.

“Ay! I will tell them,” he cried turning, as he stood at the door, “how I have sworn—and hear me all the saints of heaven!—that thou thyself, thou devil in man’s hide, shalt wear too the red cross of Burgundy, but on thy living breast.” With these words he drew forth a small, finely formed dagger, and flung it with faithful aim, point foremost, against the chest of the Constable.

The dagger rattled against the coat of mail worn beneath Armagnac’s courtly dress, and fell at his feet. Perrinet had darted through the open doorway.

“That was too much,” cried Armagnac. “Pursue him instantly; secure the ruffian at any price.” The men-at-arms hurried out. “This is an affair of personal vengeance now,” he continued, tossing his head proudly. “Here the will of Charles abides no longer. Oh! weak king—weak king, such are the first-fruits of your

ill-judged clemency. The villains dare to use their daggers upon our very persons."

When the men-at-arms hastened into the side lane into which the entrance led, the crowd assembled round the door was so great, that before they had pushed their way through it, Perrinet had disappeared. They thrust the throng before them, however, into the Rue St. Denis; but there, although the crowd gradually gave way before the armed men, the passive resistance opposed in order to facilitate the escape of the prisoner, to be arrested, was such that the task of hurrying on to capture him became every moment one of greater difficulty.

Meanwhile Perrinet had found himself borne along into the Rue St. Denis. He could do no more than mutter, "Dishonoured! vengeance!" while he turned continually, as if with the intent of further resistance. The throng around cried "Fly! fly!"

All at once an arm grasped that of Perrinet, and a voice said in his ear, "Vengeance thou shalt have—a bitter vengeance too!" He turned, and saw to his surprise the little Carmelite

monk, whom he had previously observed with Armagnac. He started back with mistrust: for, though the words were those of a friend and ally, the face of Jean Petit wore an air of savage satisfaction, which he could not suppress.

“To the sanctuary!” said the monk. “The abbey of St. Magloire, yonder, has the nearest. Thou shalt have thy vengeance, I tell thee, by the token that I have already said to thee, that when thou wouldest seek me I am to be found.”

Before Perrinet could render an account to himself of the voice, which he had heard before, or of the words, that flashed confusedly over his remembrance, the general cry—“To the sanctuary! fly!” urged him to continue his way rapidly down the street towards the abbey of St. Magloire.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SANCTUARY.

Some sudden flash of lightning strike me blind,
Or cleave the centre of the earth, that I
May living find a sepulchre, to swallow
Me and my shame together !

MASSINGER.

But ever and anon of griefs subdued
There comes a token like a scorpion's sting.

BYRON.

IN all cities, during the middle ages, there existed spots upon which when any criminal was able to set foot, he was considered safe from all human jurisdiction. These places of refuge, or sanctuaries, existed, in Paris at least, in almost every church or religious establishment of any note, as likewise, as far as the royal will sanctioned the use, in the palace of the king. They were considered so inviolable, that it was very seldom even the highest powers of the state ever ventured to infringe their privileges and lay hands upon any fugitive, whatever his crime, who had once contrived to grasp "the

horns of the altar ;” and these privileges the church considered it as due to its dignity to maintain with all the ecclesiastical power, even to excommunication, which it then wielded. The church possessed, at the same time, the right, seldom or never used, of giving up the criminal who had sought refuge under its wing : and great were frequently the intrigues on the part of the temporal authorities, in cases of the escape of any notorious political delinquent, to obtain the surrender they could not command, and dared not, with the thunders of the church suspended over their heads, to enforce. The thousand and one jurisdictions that existed in Paris during the middle ages, and had all the right of capital and summary punishment, rendered, by their abuses, such sanctuaries, although in themselves an active mockery of all justice, a necessary evil : they frequently had the privilege of saving the innocent man from violence or injustice ; and, in cases of real guilt, they were a prison, like any other ; for, when once the fugitive, wearied with the rigours of his seclusion, put foot beyond the precincts of his sanctuary, he became immediately amenable

again to that justice which ceased not to lay wait, like dogs around a badger's hole, to seize and worry him, should he show his head.

Such a privileged sanctuary was the well-endowed and powerful abbey of St. Magloire ; and, as most churches and religious establishments possessed a cell for the use of those who supplicated their mercy and protection, some pious abbess, jealous of the privileges of the church, and anxious for the better accommodation of such criminal refugees who honoured her establishment with their preference, had set apart for the purpose a sort of sacristy or vestry, which opened upon the upper end of the church, close upon the passage by which Perrinet had entered the interior of the religious establishment on the day of his last visit to the Abbess. When occupied, the door of this cell was generally closed, although a grating allowed the refugee to partake, at a distance, in the devotional exercises of the divine services performed in the body of the church.

To this species of cell Perrinet, to whom his frequent visits to the abbey had rendered its existence well known, bent his steps when he

entered the church a fugitive. In spite of the tumult of his feelings, he forgot not, by habit perhaps, his obeisance to the altar as he passed: but a crowd had followed him into the sacred building; and hurrying on, as if to conceal from view his degradation and his shame, he entered the cell; and, flinging himself down upon a wooden bench, buried his head in his hands.

The one predominant feeling in Perrinet's mind was now, once more, that of vengeance for the bitter insult he had sustained. The hatred to the Constable which had vaguely arisen in his breast from the first moment that he had considered Armagnac as the chief instigator of the intrigues that had torn Odette from him, had, however unjust in this respect, continued to boil more and more within him in the midst of the bitterness of his jealousy and suspicion against others. It now seethed over in a torrent of angry and revengeful passion. Long had his spirit wavered between good and evil—according as the better or the darker influences that surrounded him had by turns laid siege to his soul; but now the last fatal impulse had been given to the bad feeling: his good angel had fled away before the

power of the evil spirit, for which tyranny and injustice had opened wide the gates of his heart: the demon of revenge had full possession to his soul. The sense of the deep degradation, however, had, at first, the effect of utterly crushing his spirit: to this prostration of moral strength, moreover, was added that prostration of physical force, which in his state of health, so lately recovered from a wound that had so long kept him a prisoner to his couch, naturally followed, for a time, the excitement and exertion, to mind as well as body, that he had undergone during the events of the day. The first effect of the fever, that again began to run through his blood as well as to assail his mind, was to weaken and crush down, rather than to animate and excite. He sat overwhelmed, his head sunk low, incapable of any distinct or defined thought.

How long he remained in this state of prostration, Perrinet himself could not have told. The old sexton had entered with food for the inmate of the sanctuary, and had offered a few words of consolation, intermingled with inquiries for the satisfaction of his own curiosity; but finding that the unexpected guest did not choose

to heed him or to raise his head, he had departed, without recognising in the man before him the so-called “ foster-child ” of the Abbess, Perrinet Leclerc: and the door opening upon the body of the church had been closed and locked.

When Perrinet at length raised his head, with a groan, the cell was involved in considerable obscurity. The light admitted by the grating in the door from the gloomy church was very little; another opening, formed by a species of rosette of sculptured stone-work, looked out upon the passage leading into the interior of the abbey; but the passage was obscure at all times; and the folding gates, which gave communication to it from the church, having been likewise closed, it was darker still than usual; light sufficient there was, however, to observe the contents of the cell. The bench upon which the young armourer sat, a low pallet bed, the table on which the food had been placed, and a large crucifix opposite to the door, were almost the only objects that first met his eye. The feeling then came across him that he was actually a prisoner; and he cursed his own weakness in accepting, without further reflection, and in the bewilderment of his mind, the

advice to exchange his freedom, however dangerous and menaced, for the thralldom of the sanctuary, however secure. Rising hastily, he seized the drink upon the table and swallowed a portion of the contents to allay the thirst of his fever: the draught somewhat revived him. One of his most poignant thoughts, when thus recovered, was, that curious eyes might be gazing upon him through the grating in the door: he scowled in that direction; but, whether curiosity had subsided, or the church had been cleared by the sexton, he was relieved to find that no face peered at him through the bars.

On looking around him, he perceived upon the wall, opposite the rosette-opening upon the passage, a niche, in the recess of which was placed a book, protected by iron bars, so as to prevent its removal, but yet admitting of the possibility of turning over its pages with the fingers: it was one of those breviaries, considered objects of price in those days of difficult transcription, which, bequeathed by pious souls, were to be found also, exposed for public use, at many street-corners of the capital. Perrinet fixed his eyes upon the open pages, without

himself knowing why : his thoughts were on far other matters ; and, in the darkness of the cell, it would have been impossible for him to decipher the contents. But, at the same moment, a small lamp was placed in the round opening towards the passage, from without : its light gleamed across the gloomy space and fell directly upon the book. Suddenly the page on which Perri-net's eyes were fixed was illumined : and, like an unexpected revelation made manifest by a light from above, stood forth before his eyes, as in a blaze of fire, the words—" They that take the sword shall perish with the sword." He drew back as if a warning angel had spoken to him, and shuddered. But then, passing his hand over his eyes, as if to obliterate not only the sight but even the remembrance of the Divine prophecy, he turned away, exclaiming aloud, " Let me perish, then, ye saints in heaven ! but first grant me my revenge !"

" Those are not words, my son," said a mild voice, " befitting the holy building that has granted you the shelter of its sanctuary."

Before him stood the Abbess of St. Magloire, who entered, attended by two lay-sisters, by

a door opening upon the passage, so closely fitting to the divisions of the wall that it had remained unperceived by the refugee in the gloom. The sudden appearance of the revered instructress of his childhood and early youth had, coupled with her words, the effect of another warning revelation from above, upon the mind of Perrinet. He again shuddered, and hung his head.

But the surprise of the Abbess at the sight of Perrinet, as he stood in the full light of the lamp, was as painful as it was great.

“Perrinet!” she exclaimed, “is it thou, my boy—thou, the criminal, the fugitive—thou, whom evil deeds have driven to the refuge of the sanctuary! This is indeed a cruel blow! Go—go,” she added, turning to her attendants, “leave me; I would speak with him alone. Go!”

The two lay sisters left the cell; and the door was closed.

“Oh, Perrinet! my child—my well-beloved!” resumed the Abbess, with deep emotion; but then, suddenly checking her flow of feeling with an effort, she added, more sternly, “Unhappy youth! little did I think when I came, instructed that the privilege of our sanctuary had been

claimed, to warn, and, by God's help, to reform the guilty wretch by the admonitions of our holy church, or to comfort the innocent with the consolatory words of Scripture—little did I think that *you* would shock my sight. Oh! whither has your impetuous and impatient temper led you? What deed have you done? I sought, already, to warn you, by the means of old Leclerc—your father. I have since heard that, wounded in a skirmish as was supposed, you lay upon a bed of sickness. Already my heart sorrowed much for you—already I prayed, in bitterness of spirit, that, as your health might be restored, your soul might be purged of its erring passions. And now, again—what has passed?—why do I find you here?—what, what brings thee here, my boy?” and the Abbess again relapsed into a tone of tender sorrow, and wrung her hands bitterly.

“Mother,” answered Perrinet, somewhat sullenly, although not unmoved by the evident agitation of the Abbess, “I have received the vilest indignity that can be bestowed upon a free man. I have been scourged—scourged with many stripes; the scabbards of common soldiers have scarred the back of the free citizen: my

shoulders still bleed with the wounds they have seamed upon them : but it is my heart bleeds, mother, it is my heart that bleeds far more painfully : every drop of blood which throbs from it is like a drop of molten lead that sears it : and the lead gathers there, a heavy weight ; and on it is the impress, stamped in characters indelible, ‘ Debased ! degraded ! ’ ” And Perrinet, giving way to the weaker feelings which the presence of his tender instructress caused to gain the mastery for the time, covered his face with his hands and sobbed aloud.

“ Perrinet ! my child ! ” said the Abbess, alarmed, “ Thou speakest, surely, in a fever fit—thou knowest not what thou sayest ! ”

“ Mother ! ” exclaimed the young man, withdrawing his hands, and exposing a face so haggard that the Abbess started back with the passing thought that he had really lost his senses—“ Mother ! are the burning tears I shed, not likewise tears of blood ? Look at me !—tell me ! they should be tears of blood ; for such alone could cleanse away my shame ! Nay, look not so frightened, mother ; I am not mad—and yet, I myself marvel that I am not. Or is it surprise,

that I should shed tears, which thus disturbs you? Yes; wonder—wonder, that I, Perrinet Leclerc, should weep! And yet, why wonder that I feel no shame in weeping thus, when I have felt none in telling you my degradation? There was a time I should have thought that it had choked me ere I could have uttered it. But yet, away all tears! Fie on my manhood, that I should cry like a weak woman, when I should have no thought but the thought of vengeance!”

“Thou ravest, my son,” said the Abbess, when Perrinet at last paused in his incoherent outburst. “Collect thy senses! tell me what has passed! My heart throbs as if it would break, to see thee thus. Who has thus injured thee?”

“Who?—who?” cried Perrinet, violently. “Who is the powerful in this afflicted city?—who is the tyrant?—who the unjust?—who the raging devil in man’s hide?”

“In God’s name, of whom speak you?” exclaimed the Abbess, trembling.

“Of whom then but the proud ruffian, Armagnac?” replied Perrinet bitterly. “Of whom but the patron of this very house? Ah! I had forgotten that. Here his influence is all-powerful—here

the knee is bowed before him. Go, then, and deliver me up to his tyranny. Why should the sanctuary protect me here? Go—yield me to him; but, as you do so, set me once more face to face with him—and then——”

“Perrinet, Perrinet,” broke in the Abbess, with faltering voice, “I can forgive thee the wrong thou doest me in these unjust words, seeing how strongly thou art moved; but, if thou lovest me still—me, thy foster-mother, Perrinet—for I have been such to thee—strive to speak with less of frantic passion. Thou hast been wronged—I will believe it—although, perhaps, there is some strange misconception; for I cannot think that *he* would wilfully have done *thee* wrong—no, no, he could not do it, stern and arbitrary as he may be—— But speak—calmly, if thou canst—and tell me how. Oh, Holy Mother, protect us all!” and the trembling woman raised her hands and eyes to heaven.

“Wronged—only wronged! and not wilfully—no, not wilfully!” cried Perrinet, with bitter irony. “I tell you, Lady Abbess, that he has injured me most foully. Innocent of all evil, he has treated me as the vilest serf. Did you not

hear? he caused me to be scourged—scourged! Do you not understand the word?”

“But what has caused you to fly hither—to this sanctuary?”

“Think you I would cringe at his feet afterwards, like the stricken dog? I drew my dagger on him,” answered Perrinet, proudly.

“Merciful powers! you have slain him?” exclaimed the Abbess, aghast.

“No!” replied the young man, bitterly. “No, alas! That devil, of whom he is the incorporation upon earth, protected him. But I have a strong arm, and a still stouter heart. The day of vengeance will yet come: I have sworn it.”

“Saints of heaven!” cried the Abbess: and, as if forgetful or heedless of Perrinet’s presence, she flung herself down before the crucifix, with the words, “Is it thus that ye dispense justice upon earth? Is the bitterness of my punishment still to come? God’s will be done—God’s will be done!”

It was now the turn of Perrinet to be surprised and alarmed at this sudden burst of passionate feeling, the nature of which was so incomprehensible to him, in one whom he

had always known so calm and rigid, if not severe.

“Mother, mother! what ails you?” he cried, hurrying to her side.

For some time, in spite of the exclamations of the young man, the Abbess remained on her knees, with her head bent down. When she rose again, her face was very pale and her eyes streamed with tears. She gave no answer, however, to the questionings of Perrinet as to the meaning of her words; but, finding that the more violent feelings of the young man had been somewhat turned from the channel in which they had run, by the unexpected outburst of her own, she took him by the hand, received with much emotion the kiss of reverence that he now imprinted on it, and caused him to sit down on the bench while she hurried out to seek for linen rags and balm to apply to the scars upon his shoulders. She soon returned, dressed the red and swelling seams, and, when he did not see her, bent over the wounds as if she would have bestowed a kiss upon them. Her eyes were moist with tears, but her hand did not tremble in her task. When all was done, she

helped him to put on his vest, and then sat down by his side. And, now that he listened to her more calmly, the Abbess used all her powers of persuasion to turn the young man from his thoughts of vengeance. As ecclesiastical mistress and as woman, she urged the doctrine of Christian charity and forgiveness of injuries with all the eloquence her high position had placed, by practice, at her command; and when Perri-net listened not to the pious words, that reached few men's hearts at such an age, and would probably have found no place in his, under his sense of the deep indignity he had sustained, even had his spirit been mild by nature, instead of impetuous and passionate as it was, she ventured, although with hesitation and embarrassment, to promise him the pardon of the Constable, and, when he scorned the very word of pardon towards himself, the injured, even the redress of his injuries; she appealed to his love for herself; she admonished, she reasoned, she implored. Once she asked him whether the Constable knew who he was and what his name; and although his answer, "Probably not, but what mattered that?" was impatient and irri-

table, yet her mind seemed somewhat relieved. Perrinet, however, remained silent, dogged, and almost sullen ; but his sunken head showed that his spirit was already partially subdued.

Thus still sat the Abbess and the young armourer, when a quiet although unsteady step was heard shuffling along the passage from the interior of the establishment. It paused before the door of the cell—a hand was heard to try the outer fastenings. The Abbess rose in surprise, as if to rebuke the person who had ventured to disturb her. The door opened, and a small figure enveloped in a dark robe entered cautiously.

“Who comes here uncalled, and without permission of the Superior of the House?” said the Abbess, in astonishment.

The intruder seemed somewhat surprised at finding the cell already occupied by the Abbess ; for he paused for a moment, as if in indecision : but then he threw back his cowl, and displayed the pinched and cunning features of Jean Petit, the Carmelite monk.

“Master Jean Petit, in this disguise !” exclaimed the Superior. “What orders bring you ?

You should have awaited my return in my own apartment, and sent to seek me."

"Your reverence will pardon me," replied the monk, "if I have ventured thus to intrude into your presence uncalled; but I knew not that your reverence was here. To speak truth, I come upon no business connected with your holy establishment. Of mine own accord I availed myself of the permission granted me for other purposes, to come and go in the good abbey of St. Magloire, and of my knowledge of the arrangement of the building, to seek a conference with a fugitive who has claimed the benefit of your privileged sanctuary."

For once, the Carmelite monk was sincere and truthy in his dealings—a rare occurrence towards those uninitiated into the mysteries of his schemes: but a rapid appreciation of his position towards the Abbess told him that straightforwardness alone could now aid him in the designs he had in view.

Perrinet had also started forward in surprise, for in that dark robe, the peculiar limp, and the mild insinuating voice, he now recognised the stranger whom he had seen in the hovel of the

sorceress, and who had endeavoured to instil the first thought of treason against the existing powers—against the Constable, in fact—into his mind. His heart beat wildly. What did this mysterious visit portend at such a moment, when his whole soul panted for revenge—that same revenge which the dark stranger had already offered him? It almost seemed to him as if that evil spirit he had inwardly evoked to aid his vengeance, had appeared in bodily form before him to claim its prey, at the very moment the admonitions and entreaties of the pious mother had begun to soften and subdue his heart. This wild thought, that flitted rapidly over the excitable mind of the young armourer, had more of earnest reality and less of fantastic absurdity in it than he himself, upon second thoughts, might have supposed. The tempter had come to drive away his better angel from his ear.

While these thoughts, or rather feelings, were passing hurriedly through the brain of Perrinet, the Carmelite had candidly informed the Abbess that he had come for the purpose of smuggling away the tenant of the sanctuary. The Constable, he said, was too powerful, in the present dis-

ordered state of affairs, for her to be able to resist him, if he required the surrender of the criminal : he was the patron, moreover, of the establishment, and might think himself authorized to demand, what he elsewhere could have at most entreated : and, for the honour of the holy church, he continued, it would be advisable to avoid all collisions, that might lead, eventually, only to disgraceful concessions to the temporal powers. The inmate of the sanctuary, he argued, was no longer safe, then, in her keeping ; and it was better that he should be conveyed away to some other place of refuge or asylum, whither it might not be known that he had fled, and where he might remain in secure concealment. He had provided, he added in conclusion, the means for the sure escape of the refugee, by the means of the gardens and grounds of the establishment and the narrow streets running between the ramparts of the city and the *culture* of St. Magloire.

“Jean Petit,” said the Abbess, with hesitation, “you are the known ally and agent of the Constable. This may be some scheme to betray my supplicant into the hands of the Count, before I shall be able to see him and plead the cause of

the unhappy youth. This must not be. He shall not go forth. Here he is under *my* protection; and the Holy Mother shall aid to save him from all ill."

"My sister," replied the Carmelite, in a tone in which he endeavoured to mingle a certain solemnity of manner with his usual insinuating address, "I may have sought to do my duty, in these distracted times, by obeying the high will of the ruler of the land: but my duty to our holy cause is beyond the will of Count or Constable. Be he who he may, the poor monk is the agent of a higher power still than that of Armagnac; and to that higher power he is bound, body and soul, here and hereafter."

As the monk spoke, he raised his arm aloft, as if to convey to the mind of the Abbess the sense that the "higher power" of which he spoke was the power of Heaven; but the next moment he exchanged a dark glance of deep meaning at Perrinet, that spoke of a double sense to be attached to his words. The Abbess hesitated, but was not convinced. It was evident that she was unwilling to see Perrinet depart from beneath her own sheltering roof: it was as if she

could not bear to lose him from her sight at a moment of so much doubt and danger. Perrinet himself at last interposed.

“Mother,” he said firmly, “I will go forth with the good monk. He means me well, I am assured.”

The Abbess at length gave way, although with reluctance and grief. The monk then drew forth a whistle from his robe, and whistled low. A withered face almost immediately appeared at the grating of the door opening to the body of the church. The Carmelite approached the grating.

“He is ours, Mother Jehanne,” he whispered; “contrive to keep the curious crowd in the belief that he still remains within the sanctuary, and use all your wiles to lure the archers of the guard upon the wrong scent. Forget not the rendezvous at St. Eustache—you know the hour.”

A grunt of acquiescence was his only answer.

It was with still paler cheek than usual, as if with a sad presentiment, and with tears swimming in her eyes, that the Abbess raised her hands to bestow a blessing on the young armourer.

“Go, go, my son,” she said with faltering

voice, "may the Holy Virgin bless and guard you from further ill—may Heaven turn you from all erring thoughts."

Perrinet knelt at her feet, and seemed deeply moved. For a moment a feeling of hesitation again appeared to come over his mind. But, as the Abbess added, "Meanwhile I will not only work thy pardon, but grace and favour from the Constable," he started up as if a heavy hand had been laid unfeelingly upon the still smarting wounds of his back. He bowed his head without another word, and hastily followed the monk into the passage.

"I have got him from her clutches—he is mine!" muttered Jean Petit to himself; then, catching hold of Perrinet's arm with a gripe, as he hurried him along the passage to the interior of the abbey, he whispered distinctly in his ear, "Did I not tell thee thou shouldst have thy vengeance? Come then where thou shalt find the means to exercise a deed of revenge that shall go down to all ages as great, good, and noble."

The Abbess, meanwhile, had peered through the stonework opening, as if to catch the last sight of the retreating form of Perrinet; and

the light of the lamp, as she stood, fell full upon her face. When he was gone she clasped her hands, with the words "My son! my son!" At the same moment a cry from the grating towards the church startled her, and caused her blood to run chill.

"Aloyse!" rang the cry, in a screeching tone of savage surprise.

The Abbess uttered in turn a piercing shriek, and trembled in every limb.

"Aloyse!" cried the voice again, "ah! is it thou? I see thee—I know thee, changed as thou art. It is thou! Ah! *thou* art the saintly, pious Abbess of St. Magloire! thou! Oh bitter irony to earth, and bitterer irony still to heaven! Saintly—pious—thou!" and a hoarse discordant laugh followed.

"Oh! my ears deceive me!" cried the Abbess, clasping her hands convulsively together, with a look of the utmost terror.

"Thy ears deceive thee not, thou perjured one," responded the voice at the grating; "it is I—I—Jehanne—the murdered Remy's mother—I, his avenging spirit. Ah! I have found thee then once more! thou livest still—livest to

taste some of the cup of bitterness I prepared for another's mouth. Ha! ha! the expiation now can be complete."

"Jehanne—mother," sobbed the abbess, "didst thou but know the misery, the grief, the cruel remorse, thou wouldst pity, not condemn——"

"Call me not mother, vile one," cried the old woman; "defile not that word of affection—that word of sorrow—with thy mouth; or let it be a word to rouse my spirit, while it sears it as with a heated iron. Mother! ay, *his* mother — his avenging mother, I am. Ha! ha! both—both shall suffer; I have not lived in vain. Already the proud one totters on his throne of power—already are hands stretched forth to plunge their daggers in his bosom—already his death is conspired—and by my means—by my means, mark thee! First he—then thou. Ah! I have got you now—both! both!"

"Oh God! what does she mean? my brain whirls! this is some fearful dream!" stammered the victim of Mother Jehanne's wrath, half fainting.

"Ah!" screeched the old woman once more, "Satan himself must have whispered me the thought that now darts through my brain. That

youth—thy son, thou saidst—thy son! His son—my Remy's son! my poor Claude is no more, and yet that youth, thy son! By all the devils in hell, *that* were a vengeance!" A wild laugh, as if from one of the demons she evoked, followed.

"Jehanne! Jehanne!" cried the miserable Abbess, "what dost thou mean? Hear me—a word—hear me—"

But the face had disappeared from the grating. The old woman was gone. The Abbess sank upon her knees, like one felled to the ground with a blow. She raised her hands aloft with the tension of utter misery, sobbing, "Oh God! oh God! my punishment is then still to come. Long years of penitence and prayer have all been vain."

For some time the Abbess remained thus as if spell-bound. When she at last arose, it was with fainting limbs; and her step reeled as she staggered back to the interior of the establishment, like one walking in a dream. At length she reached her room. A lay-sister hurried to her side to support her, and asked whether she were not very ill. She evaded a direct reply, and desired that some one might be despatched

immediately to the palace of the Constable, to ask how best she might have an interview with him upon pressing business. But, before a messenger could be dispatched, the announcement came that the Count Armagnac himself had entered the abbey. The Abbess had scarce time to stagger to her chair, in order to receive him with due state, when the Constable entered.

“My reverend mother,” he said, with an air of authority, “may easily surmise the business that brings me hither in person. A criminal, whose capture and punishment I consider as of the utmost consequence, has taken refuge in the sanctuary of this establishment. I am a good and obedient servant of the holy church, as you yourself well know, my reverend Mother; I seek not to thwart its will, or to infringe its privileges. But this is a case where summary punishment is necessary, in order to awe the outrageous populace of Paris into fear of any further revolt: the very safety of the state requires it. I request—I *demand*—the surrender of this criminal.”

The Abbess pointed to a chair to request the Constable to be seated, and then waved her

hand to the sisters to quit the room. She was as yet unable to speak. When they were gone she seemed to struggle for force.

"It is too late : he is gone," she said at last, with an effort.

"Gone! how? whither?" exclaimed the Constable, half rising from his chair. "Have you allowed him to escape? or have you already surrendered him to my men?"

"He is gone to a place of greater safety," said the Abbess, faintly.

"Gone—you have permitted this—" began Armagnac; but the Abbess interrupted him.

"Know you *who* it was, my lord, whom you thus caused to be scourged? know you who, burning with the insult, drew his dagger on you?"

"I know not. And what matter? It was one of those rebellious citizen villains."

"It was Perrinet Leclerc."

"Perrinet Leclerc!" echoed the Constable, in some confusion. "That same youth who—"

"The same," stammered the Abbess, in a voice of bitterness, again interrupting him, as if unwilling to hear more.

"Ah! had I known, Aloyse, you may well

believe—" began Armagnac again, now rising and pacing the room sullenly and uneasily.

"Oh! God! not that name again!" cried the miserable woman. "I have heard it but now, once more, from a mouth that I never thought to hear speak on earth—a voice that sounded as the voice of the angel of extermination in my ear—a voice that uttered no word that was not of vengeance for the past. Oh! not that name again!"

"You speak in riddles," said the Constable.

"It was the voice of *his* mother," continued the Abbess, shuddering.

"Whose?"

"Ask me not!"

"Ah! I understand. It was Remy's mother," said Armagnac, gloomily.

The Abbess bowed her head, and covered her eyes with one hand.

"How came she hither? I thought she was long since no more," pursued the Constable.

"I know not," stammered the Abbess, faintly. "It was like a clap of thunder in my ears. But yet—I recollect—she spoke of conspiracy—of daggers drawn to slay you—of your

fall—your death. Beware, then; there is danger near you; and I know not whence. On all sides misery and despair!”

“Ha! I thought as much,” said the Constable, with a stern frown. “Gave she no nearer indications?”

“None.”

“But I have ready scouts,” muttered Armagnac, thoughtfully; “they shall scent out this foul conspiracy, be the traitors even hid beneath the bowels of the earth. I will see to this at once. This woman, too, shall be arrested.”

“Oh! no—no—spare her!” sobbed the Abbess. “She has suffered bitter wrong. She knows not what she says.”

The Constable gave no answer.

“But Perrinet shall not come to harm?” she cried again.

“I tell you, no.”

“Betide what may?”

“Betide what may.”

After a few words more, the Constable hurried away; and when a sister entered the room of the Abbess, she found her lying with her head hanging over the arm of her chair in a state of insensibility.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CLOISTER OF SAINT EUSTACHE.

Our plot is a good plot as ever was laid; our friends true and constant: a good plot, good friends and full of expectation.

SHAKESPEARE.

Worthies, away !

IBID.

It was with the utmost precaution that Master Jean Petit, after traversing with Perrinet the interior of the abbey of St. Magloire, the cloistered gardens attached to the building, and then, by means of a small garden-door, the kitchen-grounds and vineyards belonging to the establishment—such as were possessed also by most of the other religious houses in Paris, and called the *culture*—opened a low gate in the high wall around, by means of a pass-key, the use of which had been permitted him as the agent of the Constable in his dealings with the abbey, and which had already served when Odette was stealthily conveyed away to the Hôtel des Tournelles. He looked around him to see whether none of the agents of Armagnac were

lurking in the neighbourhood in order to prevent any escape of the criminal from the sanctuary, but the coast was clear. He beckoned to Perrinet, who followed him, cold and dark in mien, although his frame shook with fever, and his mind was so bewildered by its increasing effects that he walked as one in a dream; his brain was whirling with excitement, like that of a man who first feels the effects of madness—its want of self-control, and its ignorance of the body's action.

The lane which skirted the *culture* of the abbey ran between high bare walls. Seeing that, as far as it reached without a curve, no one was visible, the monk drew Perrinet forth and closed the gate behind him.

“All is safe, I imagine,” he said in a low tone: “caution, however, is still necessary. But where is that strange lad, whom I found lurking about the abbey, and who called himself your slave? I placed him as a scout.”

The monk hazarded a low whistle: and from behind a buttress at a turn of the abbey-wall appeared Astaroth, with Zomba clinging to his neck like a part and parcel of himself. His extravagant joy at the sight of Perrinet, and his exuberance of fantastic gesture of delight when

he ran up—demonstrations which Perrinet received with that bewilderment that left him no power to reason or scarcely to think—were such, that it was long before the Carmelite could prevail upon him to answer his questions.

“There is no skulker nigh,” he said at last; “and had there been,” he added furiously, half drawing the small dagger given him by Perrinet, “he would have received inches enough of Master Jacques here to stop his skulking many inches further.”

With unremitting caution the monk, preceding Perrinet and the lad, led on the way from the lane, through several small crooked streets, flanked by low irregular houses, in which there were but few passengers. He thus gained the Rue Montmartre, and crossed it, after sending forward Astaroth to observe whether no men-at-arms were near, and learning that there would be no danger in traversing this more frequented street; then, avoiding the entrance of the old church of St. Eustache, he stopped in another narrow street adjoining some of the out-buildings attached to the church, and knocked thrice at a door. After a moment, a voice from within demanded cautiously a question, to which the monk replied in a tone as low and cautious.

The door was then opened ; Master Jean Petit again summoned Perrinet and Astaroth to follow him ; the door was closed behind them ; and they found themselves in one of those dark passages peculiar to religious buildings. After leading them forward for a few moments, the monk opened to them a vault, which had the appearance of a crypt, or private place of burial. A few old monuments adorned its walls in indistinct confusion ; separated from the vault by folding doors of iron-work, was a small chapel lighted from above : a grating high up in the opposite wall admitted also light.

Here the monk commenced to address Perrinet upon the position in which he was placed : but finding the young armourer incapable, in his fevered state of mind and body, to listen to him, or at least fully to comprehend his words, he begged him to remain quiet, and hurried away. In a short space of time he returned, however, with a small flask, the potion contained in which he begged Perrinet to swallow. For a moment the mind of the young armourer was harassed by the thought that some ill was intended him by a man, who, however much he might have revealed other designs, was the avowed agent of the Constable : a similar fancy seemed to cross

the mind of the monkey-bearer, for he half drew his dagger, as if ready for the orders of his master, and glared at the monk ferociously. But Perrinet almost immediately gave way before the calm and commanding air of the little Carmelite: he drank the potion recklessly. The monk then spread out his dark robe on the stone floor and begged Perrinet to lie down and repose, however hard the bed. Overcome by fatigue and fever, the young man obeyed: the monk looked at him steadfastly for some minutes; presently the sight of Perrinet began to be still more confused; his eyes closed; his head fell against the elevated step of a monument.

“ Let him sleep,” said the monk to Astaroth, and took his departure. The youth sat down by the side of his master, never removing his eyes from the face of Perrinet, and watching his breathing, that grew calmer and calmer by degrees. The very monkey seemed to be aware of the necessity of tranquillity, and reposed its head upon its master’s bosom.

When Perrinet, after about an hour’s slumber, opened his eyes, his brain was clear of its fierce bewilderment, the fever no longer rolled in his veins, but it was at first with difficulty that he could render himself an account of where he was.

Through the grating which admitted light from without, came a confused noise of many voices. He sat up, and was about to question Astaroth as to what had passed, when the Carmelite again entered.

“ Ah ! it is well,” he said with an air of satisfaction ; “ my potion has worked its spell : my patient is already waking. The time is come,” he added with an air of triumph, “ the time is come, young man ! On one deed of glory, for which your hand is reserved, depends the fate of him who has so deeply injured you. The hour of vengeance is at hand. Follow me.”

Perrinet sprang to his feet.

“ Whither would you lead me ? What would you do with me ?” he said.

“ Come and see !” replied the monk mysteriously, taking him by the hand.

The noise of voices increased as the Carmelite led Perrinet forward. All at once they emerged into an arched cloister surrounded by a plot of ground, that exhibited a scene appearing all the more fantastic from the dusky gloom of the twilight, that was now beginning to fall around.

In the middle space were collected a considerable body of men, in attire as various as their attitudes : some were in the dress of citizens

of the trading and working classes, many in ecclesiastical robes of the different orders of priesthood, or monks; some were standing around a tall haggard-looking man, who was declaiming violently: others were seated upon long green hillocks, which were evidently graves, and were talking earnestly among themselves: many others, again, were spread upon the grass; these were for the most part crowned with chaplets of green leaves and flowers; and wine-flasks and cups were among them. In parts the scene wore the air of a festive revel; in others, of a religious conference; in others, again, of the meeting of a guild of citizens occupied in gravely discussing their interests. The arched and vaulted cloisters around were also filled with dusky groups. The noise of the haranguings in various parts of the open space, and of the many clamorous conversations, rose confusedly upon the air.

A few words from the Carmelite betrayed to the young armourer the secret, that he stood in the midst of an assembly of the *Confrérie* of Saint André—one of the most ancient clubs upon record, (excepting the guilds and companies of the trades,) in which a certain degree of levity was mixed up with a deeper and sterner purpose. It was necessary only to listen for a

moment, to be aware what was that purpose : the overthrow, perhaps the death, of the detested Constable—the delivery of the command of Paris and the whole realm into the hands of the Duke of Burgundy : and the heart of Perrinet beat strangely when he first became aware that he stood in the midst of a vast conspiracy—that he himself was led there a conspirator against the ruling powers of the state. For a moment this feeling was a startling one to the young armourer's mind : the principles of honour and of faith, which had been inculcated in his bosom by his father—the whole direction of his education, although one that had been in constant conflict with his impatience and impetuosity of temper,—all his former self, in fact, was at variance with the thought of treason. But the promptings of the evil spirit, that had gradually gained the mastery over his whole soul—the whisperings, deep and distinct, if not loud, of the demons of wrath and revenge within him, were too powerful not to combat and overcome at once the faint struggles of old thoughts—old prejudices he was ready to term them now. Besides, had he desired it, even, he felt that it would have been now too late to return upon his steps. The lad Astaroth, on the contrary,

seemed to be immediately in his natural element: his instincts told him at once that there was a future prospect of convulsion, and bloodshed, and death, in that strange and confused assembly: his eyes sparkled, and his nostrils were distended, like those of a young tiger-cub at the smell of gore.

The confused groups of the assembly, although occupied in divers manners, seemed all animated by one thought, if not by one spirit, as the Carmelite held Perrinet back for a moment, to see what impression the scene would make upon him.

“The fixed and immutable decrees of the orbs of heaven have willed it,” shouted the haggard-looking tall man, raising his eyes to heaven, while his arms were clasped, cross-fashion, tight over his breast. He was declaiming to a crowd of grave-looking citizens, and seemed to be in full swing. “In vigil and in prayer have I sought to read their heavenly divinations. The holy book Smagorad, in which is to be found all knowledge, all influence, all power—the future, the present, and the past—proclaims it in its sacred pages. The oppressor falls and bites the gory earth. The red cross blazes aloft; it sheds its beams around, as the sun of fire and of life.” It was the inspired hermit from Languedoc, who,

indignant at the insult the Constable had put upon his sanctity and his powers of holy working, had since found his inspiration suddenly turn in favour of the Duke of Burgundy.

“Dark clouds hang over the devoted city; but, from the south, towards the marches of Berry and Orleans, comes a light, clear and brilliant,” screeched, to a more stolid-looking and gaping group of a lower class of citizens, the shrill voice of Mother Jehanne. She had now, by desire of the Carmelite, again resumed her supposed trade of sorceress. “Satan still stalks abroad and roars like a devouring lion: but the devil’s day is done; the deliverer is at hand; ye shall open to him your arms, and they shall be filled with plenty.”

“We will have no more delaying and dallying. *Nulla mora!*” shouted, to a noisier group of scholars of the University, the grizzle-headed old student, who, although he had never been able to learn a page of his Aristotle, was a wonderful dealer in questionable Latin phrases. “The time is comewhen wemust act at once, and slit that accursed Constable’s nose for him. *Nares Constaboli isti findebimus. Virat Burgundia!*”

A shout of applause followed. It was echoed by a grunt from the burly brother Abdias, who,

in his passive manœuvres in furthering the schemes of the active-minded Jean Petit, seemed to devote himself by predilection to the easy task of giving a fillip to the naturally excitable natures of the younger generation.

A Franciscan monk, whose back seemed bent by fastings and privation, and who sometimes wandered from group to group, with his cowl pulled down over his head, as if he were studying the *ensemble* of the assembly, also growled a faint applause, which had something in it of a laugh.

One of the noisiest groups of the whole assembly, however, as far as force of lungs and deep bass voices went, was that of the rough men who had in part thrown themselves down upon the grass, with the flasks and cups of wine or hippocrass, and whose shaggy heads and rugged features were crowned so grotesquely and unharmoniously with the coronets of leaves and flowers.

“Long live Lambert our brother!” cried several of them; “he has risen from the dead to lead us on to vengeance!”

“Had he been dead, as we supposed, we had avenged his death,” cried the broad-shouldered, truculent-looking butcher who had been addressed in the hall of the Trinity by the name of Caboche; “but there is no reason we should not

avenge him all the same, though living. Knives and axes to their work ! ”

“ Thanks, gossips, for this kind concern for me,” replied Lambert the butcher, who stood by. “ Let the oppressor fall. Let us take the brave Duke of Burgundy for our leader and the counsellor of our good king : but, when once we have opened our gates of Paris to the red cross of Burgundy, and driven forth the white, may the holy Virgin and our patron St. Jacques defend us from further evil.”

Sturdy and resolute, the butcher Lambert was no less honest and well-thinking : his clear blue eye did not belie the excellent heart that beat in his bosom. He was one of those who desired the liberty, as he fancied to obtain it, of his country—or rather, of the oppressed city of Paris—but who, at the same time, was averse to bloodthirsty measures, after the first violence was past. Perhaps his narrow escape from death, and the solitary thoughts engendered by the confinement to which the calculations of Master Jean Petit had subjected him, had also contributed to foster those more Christianlike feelings, which were not the characteristic of his age.

“ A dead rabbit ! What, has Lambert no more blood in him than a dead rabbit ! ” cried

Caboche, starting up to his feet. "Death and destruction to the Armagnac and all his friends, I cry ! Let them be chopped and hewn in pieces—flesh, bone, and marrow."

"My friends and gossips," began Lambert again—but Caboche did not choose to heed him.

"What say you all, my brothers ? What say you, Legoix ?" he continued.

"Flesh—bone—and marrow !" was the only reply of the big young fellow last addressed, who seemed to have been toasting "Burgundy" rather more than his heavy brain permitted with impunity.

Most of the butchers cried "Death to all !" Some few, out of respect perhaps to so much esteemed a gossip as Lambert, seemed to range themselves on his side, and murmured slightly.

"What, have we traitors among us ?" exclaimed Caboche, fiercely. "By the soul of my mother the tripewoman, I will hew them down with my own axe if there be. I have my party ; and it shall do my will. At my beck I can raise a whole army of our varlets and apprentices—our killers, and flayers, and stunners : and death to them who would oppose them !"

"Have a care, neighbour Caboche," said Lambert, sturdily, while the others held back ;

“have a care that the axe you would wield turn not to fell yourself. If you let loose your boys of blood, see how you recall them.”

“I am as good as their king, harkye, Lambert,” replied Caboche, with a savage look: “and they know me too well not to do my bidding. Death to all the Armagnacs, I say; and you shall cry it too, Master Lambert.”

“Yes, death to the Armagnacs, one and all,” said a short stout man, who had sat apart, and now got up: he wore upon his bristly black head a big crown of flowers, that, spite of his jovial face, contrasted frightfully with the half squint of his little pig’s-eyes, and the wolf-like look of his narrow forehead. As he spoke, he made a movement as if he were wielding a large two-edged sword. A sort of silence, and a partial retreat, followed his words; even Caboche was struck for a moment.

“After all,” he resumed, after a pause, “Master Cappeluche is a true friend of Burgundy. There’s my hand, gossip headsman,” and he thrust it forth to the fellow; “if yours be bloody, mine, please the saints, will soon not be less so.”

“He who touches the headsman’s hand is doomed,” murmured Lambert, who saw among

them, with no good will, the man who so lately regretted not taking his life.

“ ‘Death to all the Armagnacs, without exception or mercy,’ you shall cry, Lambert, or you’ll have to deal with me,” said Caboche, advancing on him.

“ No quarrels, my friends,” said the Carmelite, coming forward at this juncture; “let us all join in the cry, ‘ Long live Burgundy!’ ”

“ Long live Burgundy!” was the general shout, “ ’Tis Master Jean Petit—he is come at last—hear him.”

The crowd now concentrated around the little Carmelite, whose sharp and active mind had caused most of the other conspirators to look upon him as their leader and their chief. Before he answered the many questions addressed to him, Jean Petit called for the oath of allegiance and fidelity to the Duke of Burgundy; and the general cry followed, “ Allegiance and fidelity to the red cross of Burgundy, we swear.” Then came the shout again of “ Long live Burgundy!”

“ You don’t cry, *amice*,” said the grizzled-headed student to the Franciscan monk, who had retreated from the centre group to the outskirts of the throng, and pulled his cowl still more low over his face on seeing Perrinet and

Astaroth advance close to the Carmelite, and who now stood beside him : “ Come, out with it—Long live Burgundy.”

“ Long live——” began the Franciscan, but the words seemed to come unwillingly from his throat. When the student turned to give him a reminder by a blow on his ribs, he was no longer there—the student looked around, he was gone. The business of the day, however, began to be too interesting to enable the old boy to give vent to any sentences of doubtful Latin upon this suspicious occurrence.

In the middle of the green cemetery, surrounded by the cloisters, stood a huge stone cross, raised upon several steps. Upon the topmost stood the little Carmelite, raising himself up to his full height upon his longer leg, and supporting himself against the shaft of the cross; his cowl was thrown back, and left fully displayed his dark and withered, but astute and expressive face : there was a restless fire in his hollow dark eyes ; a smile of triumph pervaded his sharp and animated features ; his body was so slight, and even crippled, that the mind which shone forth seemed too vast for such a frame. For some time he harangued the crowd, that was now entirely concentrated around the

master-spirit, upon the tyranny of Armagnac, and then upon the merits of the Duke of Burgundy ; whose assassination of Louis Duke of Orleans, the king's brother, he not only justified, but spoke of as a great and noble action, good in the eyes of heaven, and politic upon earth, with arguments similar to those he had employed to Perrinet in the hovel of the sorceress. The eloquence of the Carmelite was great; his manner grew more violent as he worked himself up to a pitch of excitement in his declamation, and the applause of the confused and motley crowd followed every paragraph of his oration.

“ But the hour of vengeance, for which we have all so long prayed to heaven, is come at last,” he continued ; “ before you stands another victim of the tyranny of the Armagnac, but, with the aid of God, the last. His soul also burns to avenge itself for the most foul of wrongs, committed upon him by that devil in man's hide, as ye so justly call him ; and Heaven has reserved his hand for the completion of the deed that shall secure the just vengeance of us all upon the ungodly oppressor of the Church, the tyrant of the land.” As he thus spoke, he stretched forth his hand to Perrinet, who stood

below, and pulled him up a few steps in sight of the assembly.

“His hand—*his* hand!” muttered Mother Jehanne with bitterness: “that were indeed God’s justice.”

“Father, what would you have me do?” cried Perrinet; “my hand is ready; I accept the task, whate’er it be. I have sworn to make him wear the red cross of Burgundy upon his living breast; and I will keep my oath. Tell me how the deed may best be done—I swear once more it shall be executed.”

“Long live Perrinet Leclerc, the brave armoured!” cried those of the students who knew his person; “Long live Perrinet Leclerc!” was shouted on all sides.

“My son, I accept your pledge,” resumed the monk. “Hear me, friends. The father of this youth is guardian of the gate of St. Germain: he will find access to his father’s house, possess himself of the keys; and the gate—the entrance to Paris—the purpose in which the brave duke has been so long foiled—the triumph of Burgundy, and the overthrow of Armagnac—all is in our hands.”

“What do you say?” cried Perrinet aghast; “rob my father, my poor father, of his keys!

Treachery and dishonour ! I was not prepared for this. I offered my hand to strike, but not to steal. I did not think——”

“My son, I have your unreserved and unrestricted pledge to do the deed I should propose,” replied the Carmelite with an air of authority: “What vengeance more sure can you wreak upon the head of Armagnac? What deed more noble can you do than by opening the gates of Paris to the deliverer? Treachery and dishonour it is not—but glory, honour, patriotism, renown to all future times. I tell you that the end justifies the means; be there a scruple on your conscience, in the name of our church and our holy religion I absolve you from it.”

“Betray my father!” murmured Perrinet gloomily.

“No; make the name of your father great and glorious; such will be the deed you do,” said Jean Petit, with an air of enthusiasm.

Perrinet sank his head.

“What nobler deed can illumine his name, as with a saintly halo, than the deed that shall drive this agent of Satan from his seat of power?” pursued the Carmelite. “Or thinkest thou,” he said to Perrinet, in a lower tone, “that the stain of shame and degradation which

such an act can alone wash out, would sit more brightly on thy father's name? Think on the scabbard blows—think on the insult; and think, too, that thy father, when all is past, will but applaud the son who has avenged *his* honour in avenging his own!"

"Be it so," said Perrinet, raising his head, as he was led on by the insinuations of the wily monk. "I am resolved. Let my very soul be shut to all but thoughts of vengeance. It shall be done."

"Hear you, my friends," resumed Jean Petit. "The gate of St. Germain will this night be ours. The Count de l'Isle-Adam, with a chosen body of men, lies in wait to seize the first opportunity that should offer of entering the city. He and his troops, disguised, are dispersed among the neighbouring villages. Half-an-hour alone will suffice to collect them in marching order to come down upon Paris. We must find means only to convey the information to the Count, that this noble youth will be ready to open to him the gate on his approach. Let us devise quickly how this may be done. Haste is necessary, and caution likewise. But doubtless Heaven will favour us; for at last the holy hour of vengeance has struck—the sacred sword of justice is in our grasp!"

A confused acclamation followed this address ; and before any means of conveying the necessary information to the outlying Burgundian troops could be proposed, Astaroth sprang up the steps of the cross, and with his usual furious boldness of manner offered his services. His master, he said, would be a warrant for his zeal and truth ; and he knew more than one trick of the mountebank's trade, he added, to enable him to get beyond the city walls. Perrinet, who stood, gloomy and dark, with folded arms, nodded his concurrence in the proposal of the youth ; and, after a hasty consultation, the offer was accepted. The necessary information was given to the lad as to what direction he should take in order to find the Count de l'Isle-Adam ; and the signet ring of the Carmelite was confided to him as a warrant of the truth of his mission.

Scarcely were these instructions completed, when a pale man, who was known to most as the sexton of the church, rushed through the cloister in alarm, with the news that the church was invested by men-at-arms, who, in spite of resistance, had forced an entrance.

" Betrayed !" was the general cry ; and a scene of confusion ensued.

" No matter now," exclaimed Jean Petit,

hurriedly. "Our scheme is laid. Away! ye know our various means of secret exit. Hold yourselves all ready for the night's work. Let a few, in two hours hence, meet me in my cell, or rather—no, near the church of Notre Dame; for I at last may be betrayed. There we will consult upon our last arrangements. Away!"

Most of the conspirators had already dispersed, when Jean Petit seized Perrinet's arm, and hurried him, with the boy, separately from the others, behind a monument that advanced in relief from the walls of the cloisters. The noise of the armed tread of the soldiery already resounded along the arched vaults, when the Carmelite, pressing back a piece of stonework that opened a door, hastily pushed the young armourer and the monkey-bearer through it, and then followed himself.

When the men-at-arms, with a Franciscan monk among them, appeared upon the cemetery sward, no one was there but the sexton, who appeared to be picking blades of grass from the interstices of the cross.

"Gone—too late!" exclaimed, with rage, Master Cleofas, the spy, mountebank, and quack doctor, tossing back his monk's cowl. "Satan himself must stand their friend! Some of you

disperse among the building, and seize all you find. Take that traitor yonder," pointing to the trembling sexton, "with you."

The poor man protested his innocence, and swore that no mortal being had been in the cloisters that day; but Cleofas had his reasons for knowing better.

"Foiled again," said the quack: "but still this day's work is not yet done. I will have my reward out of it yet."

CHAPTER IX.

THE GATE OF SAINT GERMAIN.

Revenge is now the cud
That I do chew.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

I'll be no father to so vile a son.

ROWLEY.

'Tis done !

THOMSON.

THE night had fallen, when two forms might have been dimly seen cautiously skirting the houses of the old Rue des Cordeliers, which led to the gate of St. Germain, one of the principal entrances to Paris towards the south, in that quarter of the city that lay on the left bank of the Seine—the gate, in fact, opening upon the highway at that time leading to Orleans and Tours. These two forms, those of a tall young man and a seeming boy, profited by every angle formed by the jutting out of the gables of the irregularly built houses, to slink behind their shadow, and sometimes to pause and reconnoitre the state of the street. This manner of proceeding showed that they considered the utmost precaution necessary to prevent their being seen ; for the street was

empty of all passengers, in obedience to the last edict of the Constable, which had that afternoon been proclaimed by sound of trumpet, forbidding all the citizens of Paris to appear in the streets after nightfall, and commanding them at that hour to seek their own homes, under pain of being considered as spies, or enemies of the state, and treated as such :—a measure which had been taken, probably, in consequence of the riotous demonstration in the hall of the Trinity, in order to prevent any further outbreak, but which had only excited further murmurs from the refractory, and remonstrances even from the most peaceable, that they would next be kept prisoners, and not allowed to stir out at all. The moon, however, shone out at intervals, although clouds were hurrying every moment more rapidly and more thickly over it, threatening soon to vanquish its power altogether, and promising a stormy and disagreeable night : and it was at such moments, when the pure brilliancy of the spring moon shed a broad light upon the street, that the two cautious individuals concealed themselves.

At length they gained a small open space directly before the gate of the city : and they paused behind the advancing gable of the last

house; for at that moment the moon, already high in the sky, behind the gateway, was illuminating almost with the clearness of day the small space before them.

Beyond was dimly visible, in the shadow that covered it, the dark profound vault of the city gate. On either side extended the massive city walls and ramparts. To the right of the gateway might be faintly seen a flight of stone steps winding upwards towards the broad platform that ran along the whole length of the city-wall above; where the dark form of a sentinel, his bright partizan and his polished helmet every now and then sparkling in the moonlight, was sometimes traversing slowly the space over the top of the broad gateway, and sometimes descending a few steps from this higher elevation, in order to guard the ascent by the staircase: at intervals his hoarse voice shouted the cry of "Sentinels, watch!" and then the same cry might be heard to be caught up at a little distance, and then further on, until the startling sound died away like distant thunder. On the other side of the gateway, growing, as it were, like a big excrescence from the wall, was a narrow house of two stories, surmounted by a gable attic, that seemed to have taken root and to

cling to the ramparts by minor excrescences, the nature of which was undistinguishable in the gloom. From a narrow window of horn on the ground floor of the house came a stream of dull light that showed some one to be watching within.

The night wanderers waited for some space of time until the moon should be again obscured, and then, profiting by a moment when the sentinel's head was turned towards the plain beyond the city walls, the young man, followed by the stripling, rapidly and noiselessly crossed the space intervening between the spot where he lay concealed and the house, and stood beneath its shade. He paused again, to be sure that they had been unperceived, and then, passing a dagger's point between the doorway post and the lock, he caused the latch within to fly upwards, pushed open the door, and entered rapidly. In a small room within sat an old man at a table, upon which were still spread the remnants of his supper. A lamp by his side displayed his rough but honest-looking face, and his round smooth forehead encircled by curling white hair. He started at finding his dwelling thus unceremoniously invaded; but, as he shaded his eyes with his hand, the light of the lamp almost immediately revealed to him the intruder.

“Perrinet!” he said, springing up; “Welcome, my boy! I am glad to see thee. Praise be to the Virgin! thou art, then, abroad once more! I visited thee during thy confinement to thy couch from thy untoward wound—the result of a skirmish in the students’ quarter, I heard. Oh, my poor boy! canst thou never calm thy hot blood? Must thou be ever thrusting thyself into quarrel and dagger-drawing? But no, I will not scold thee now; I am too glad to see thee once again; so frown not at me so gloomily. I came to see thee, I say, whenever my duties as guardian of the gate would permit me; but yon jackanapes, whom I see thou hast with thee, with his unlucky beast, would not let me have speech of thee upon pretext of thy fever. How canst thou keep so strange a serving-lad about thee! But this is all a piece with the wild fancies that thou always hadst, even as a child. Come, come, I am right heartily glad to see thee, Perrinet—it is seldom that thou comest to visit thy poor old father—and the more especially that I see thee well once more!” And the old man clasped Perrinet in his arms, and kissed him on either side of his face, with every demonstration of rough parental enderness.

Astaroth, who had scowled at the words of old Leclerc that had reference to himself, seemed, however, to hold back in deference to the father of the master of his attachment ; and, making himself at home at once with his usual independence, he went to squat in a corner of the room with his monkey.

Perrinet returned the caresses of the old man, but with a gloomy and preoccupied air.

“But why didst thou come thus stealthily upon me?” continued old Leclerc ; “instead of thus opening my door, why didst thou not knock for admittance?”

“Father,” said Perrinet, somewhat sulkily, “hast thou not heard the last edict of the Constable, that forbids the citizen of Paris to show himself in the open ways after nightfall? None are free now to walk openly or to knock boldly.”

“But no one, surely,” replied the old man, laughing, “would prevent the son from visiting his father because the night has fallen?”

“What are father and son, husband and wife, lover and mistress, to him who is ready to support tyrannical edicts by arbitrary violence?” said the young armourer, in the same gloomy tone.

“You know I like not to hear such words,

Perrinet," said old Leclerc, "and that I *will* not hear them. It is not for such as us to question the commands of those in power: they do for the best; and we must submit, and not cavil at them: such grumblings please me not. But enough of this," he continued, changing his tone to one of tenderness. "Thou wilt say I am but an unkind father; and all the saints in heaven know how glad I am to welcome thee. I have suffered and I have grieved for thee; and there have been other reasons, too; but more of that hereafter: and now I will not spoil the happy hour of our meeting, by cross words and cold looks. By St. John the Evangelist! harshness were ill-suited harmony to the words of pleasant greeting. Thou comest late; and thou wilt not leave me now, I hope. I have sat solitary hours enough at my lonely table. Thou shalt take thy old place at it, my boy; and we will make a merry night of it."

"In truth, I came to profit by thy kindness, father, and spend the night here," replied Perrinet, in the same gloomy tone. "Business took me to this quarter of the city: the night fell: the edict was imperative; and I came to thee."

"Thou knowest that thy place is ever at the table and the hearth," answered the old man.

"Thy bed is in thy former chamber. Thou occupiest them far too seldom."

"I thank thee, father," replied the young armourer, throwing himself down upon a chair, and sinking his head upon his hand. "Thou art kind, and lovest me always." He heaved a heavy sigh.

"Now, then, to supper," said old Leclerc, heartily. "Thou wilt find that I have left enough, as though I had had a presentiment of thy coming, which, I confess, I had not."

"Thanks; I cannot eat; I am not hungry," muttered Perrinet.

"Then take a cup of cider," pursued the old man; "it will cheer thee, after thy fatigues: for thou lookest but a poor pale-faced thing since thy wound. Come; it will cheer, I say, and never harm thee."

"Thanks; I cannot drink; I have no thirst;" answered Perrinet, as if the very thought of tasting his father's hospitality at such a moment choked him.

"Neither eat nor drink!" murmured old Leclerc, shaking his head, with a look of anxiety. "But yon fellow will not be of that mind, I warrant me. Come hither, Masters Jackanapes, both of you."

Astaroth, thus summoned, needed no second

bidding, and applied himself to his meal, taking care that Zomba should have his full share of dainties. Perrinet shrugged his shoulders, and elevated his eyebrows impatiently; but he seemed as yet unresolved how to act. His open and impetuous character was averse to every thing that had the semblance of dissimulation; and he deeply felt the influence of the paternal love of the old man: and yet he was compelled, in the furtherance of the designs before him, to practise a dissimulation most repugnant to him, and conceal his embarrassment beneath a veil of ill-humour that was far from his real feelings towards the good old man, whose love he knew he was about to repay so ill by a deed of treachery. He thus remained sullen and morose in appearance. Old Leclerc gazed on him for some time with a scrutinizing and anxious eye. At length he went up to him, and placed his hand upon the shoulder of the silent young man.

“Why this sombre and thoughtful air, my boy?” he said kindly. “Art thou still ill? Still ailing from thy wound, perhaps?”

“No.” replied Perrinet, without looking up: “I am not ill. My wound pains me no longer—not that wound, at last.” The least words were rather muttered to himself with bitterness, than

spoken out aloud. But the old man heard them.

“What dost thou mean?” he said, anxiously.

“Hast thou received another hurt?”

“No—no. It is nothing, my father.”

“And yet thou speakest not to me as thou art wont to do, my son,” pursued old Leclerc. “Perrinet, Perrinet, thou concealest something from me.”

“Nothing,” was the young man’s answer.

“Perrinet, look me in the face, and tell me truly, as thy nature always speaks, openly and boldly; this hang-dog look becomes thee not. What hast thou on thy mind?”

Perrinet raised his head and endeavoured to meet firmly the steady gaze of the old man, as he answered somewhat impatiently—“Once more, I tell thee, father, I have nothing.” But the effort, slight as it was, was more than he could master; his eye was troubled, and he immediately turned away his face again. The old man shook his head.

“Perhaps I can read thy thoughts better than thou deemest,” said old Leclerc, after another pause. Perrinet started as if his secret had really been divulged to the old man’s penetrating gaze; but the next words reassured him.

“Thy heart suffers, my poor boy: thy affections have been thwarted, I know. But all will

go well in time.”—Perrinet started again, and a heavy sigh burst hurriedly from his bosom.—“ Well—well. Thou art impatient, I see. Thou wilt not hear me now. We will speak more of this to-morrow, when the good rest, which I pray the blessed saints to give thee, shall have somewhat chased away this gloom.”

“ Yes — yes — to-morrow ;” said Perrinet springing up. “ I am weary now. I am still ill at ease in body ; and I have fatigued myself much to-day. I will go to bed at once. Astaroth, there, is accustomed to hard fare, and will sleep soundly upon my old mantle that still hangs above, methinks. Come, boy, thou hast had thy fill now ; we will to rest. To-morrow, my father—to-morrow—ay ! to-morrow.” In spite of this effort, as he spoke, the brow of the young armourer grew even more gloomy than before.

“ As thou willest, my son,” said old Leclerc, kindly. “ Thou art ever master here, thou knowest, to come and go, and do as best seemeth to thee. Go to rest, then. Here thou hast a light.”

The old man lighted a small hand-lamp at that which stood upon the table, and gave it into Perrinet’s hand. Astaroth rose to obey his master’s bidding. Perrinet moved towards a small elevated door, from beneath which three

steps advanced into the room; then he hesitated—then turned, and said, without looking at the old man, “You yourself will go to bed, my father—doubtless?”

“Yes—yes—soon,” answered old Leclerc, carelessly. “The outer round has been already made; it is allowed to no one to leave the city; and it is not likely that any one will seek to enter it at such a time. I shall sleep undisturbed, probably, without the exercise of my functions being needed. But heed not for me. Good night, my boy! and the Holy Mother bless and guard thee from all harm and evil.”

“Good night, my father,” replied the young man, “and—may the saints above watch o’er thee likewise.” The last words seemed to choke him, as though he felt that there was a bitter hypocrisy in their sense.

Perrinet opened the small door, and mounted slowly the steep ladder-like staircase, fashioned in the thickness of the wall, that led up to the story above—he never once ventured to turn his head to look again upon the old man. He was followed by the obedient monkey-bearer. Old Leclerc sighed, shook his head once more, and sat down at his table again, lost in reflection.

Above was a small chamber, containing a bed

and a few articles of furniture: but, scanty as was their number, and humble as was the aspect of the room, the heart of Perrinet swelled as he cast the light of his hand-lamp around. It was there that many happy although solitary hours of his childhood had been passed—there had been fostered the many day-dreams of his earlier youth—there had he felt the first throbbings of his heart, when awakened to the feeling of love for the first and only loved one—there had he known the careless bliss of youth, even in the midst of the awakening tumult of stormier passions: and now he entered it again, an altered and a miserable man—the day-dreams flown—the careless lightness of heart gone for ever—his affections blighted—and his harassed mind meditating a deed of treachery. He groaned aloud, as he set down the lamp; but then he made an effort to chase away these feelings.

“There is no time to be lost,” he said to As-taroath. “Is thy heart still bold to render the service thou hast proffered? If it quails but in one throb of pulsation—if thy spirit recoils but one hair’s breadth from the deed—tell me so, openly. I will not chide thee—I will seek other means.”

“My spirit quail!—my heart know fear!—

oh no ! ” interrupted the youth, fiercely. “ And am I not your slave, master ?—is it not yours to command, mine to obey ? Speak ! I am ready ! ”

“ Come, then,” said Perrinet.

He first tore off the coverings of the bed, knotted them stoutly together, and tied them around his body ; then he opened a narrow closet in which a rude ladder mounted to the small gable attic above. He paused to listen, for a moment, whether all was still in the old guardian’s room below, then scrambled upwards. The garret above was dark, and filled with the mouldy smell of long disuse. Every inch of the narrow space, however, was known to Perrinet ; and, feeling along the low sloping roof, he found a wooden trap, that he pushed upwards, and swung himself without. The boy sprang after him. They were in the open air, on the top of the house. Perrinet slid gently downwards upon one of those parapet ledges already described as forming excrescences attaching the house to the city wall. Upon this ledge, which was still surrounded by a rude, half-broken paling of wood, had been the romantic little hanging garden of his boyhood. How oft had he there tilled and planted ! This scene of his youthful labours, he

could see by the faint light of the night, was now a little spot of desolation : the flowers had long since withered to dust ; the very earth had been calcined or washed away. Again Perrinet sighed convulsively.

“ Canst climb, boy ? ” he said, at last, to the lad by his side ; “ but I need scarce ask thee.”

“ Like a cat—almost like Zomba ! ” laughed Astaroth.

“ Hush ! not so loud ! ” interposed Perrinet. “ Ah ! many a time and oft, as a truant boy, have I climbed this height without a thought of danger, in the recklessness of wanton spirit ; and now my heart beats. Ah ! no more of this ! ”

The distance was not great from the narrow parapet to the top of the city wall ; and scrambling up by means of interstices where masses of masonry had fallen from the effect of time, a passage well known to him in his early days, Perrinet soon swung himself to the level of the terrace on the top of the wall. Astaroth was again quickly by his side, with Zomba clinging to his back.

“ Down—quick ! ” cried Perrinet, in a low voice ; for at that moment the sentinel appeared upon the space occupying the summit of the gateway. They both flung themselves down flat on the ground, out of sight of the guard.

For some time they lay thus ; but the sentinel still remained in his position, looking towards the country beyond : the whistle, with which he was wiling away the heavy hours, reached them distinctly where they lay.

“ Curses on him ! ” muttered Perrinet ; “ every moment is precious ; and he budes not from that spot. If he would but descend to the summit of the staircase, we might be free to act here. Will the fellow never go ? ”

“ I think I know a trick will scare him thence,” whispered the lad.

“ As how ? ” inquired his master.

Without another word Master Astaroth took off his flat cap, and with the band that encircled it tied it round the head of the monkey : then he pulled off his vest and passed it over the back of the animal.

“ Now, Zomba,” whispered the lad in caressing accents to the beast, “ to work, to work ! hist ! hist ! at him, boy ! plague him, teaze him ! scare him out of his life ! and come not back until I call ! Hist ! hist ! at him ! ” As he spoke he cautiously rose, pointed out the sentinel to the monkey, and again urged the beast to fly at him.

The intelligent animal seemed to understand, and, as if proud of his fancy dress, sprang im-

mediately upon the summit of the gateway. Astaroth again crouched down.

Presently the cry of the sentinel might be heard, "Who goes there?" then it was repeated; then came a sort of cry of alarm, "Jesu—Marie! it is Satan himself!" Then the listeners heard the steps of the man hurrying down from the top of the gateway to the continuation of the terrace on the other side. Astaroth beckoned Perrinet to rise. They could indistinctly see the ape anticking on the gateway in such a fashion, as might easily have given the least superstitious of those superstitious times the fancy that it was a demon of darkness in visible form. Profiting by the alarm and disappearance of the sentinel, Perrinet hurried the boy to the side of the wall overlooking the country beyond.

"Now, now," he said, untwisting the rope of bedding round his waist, "let thyself down along the coverings—stay—yes, the knots are fast—I will hold firmly above. Where we stand there is a tree rising from the edge of the moat—thou canst thus reach its branches. Thou wilt not fear to swim the water, I trow, when thou reachest the bottom?—I knew thou wouldst not. When thou gainest the other side, thou

knowest thy directions to find the Count de l'Isle-Adam in his place of concealment. Let him march hither at once—without delay. I cannot say God speed thee—but speed thee all the demons of revenge.”

Astaroth assented to every proposition of his master. He glided down the rope of coverings fashioned by the young armourer. Presently Perrinet heard a rustling of leaves—his heart beat lest the noise should be heard likewise by the sentinel; presently, again, came a slight splashing of water; but still the sentinel seemed too much occupied by his terrors of a supernatural nature to give any heed. The monkey was still anticking on the gateway, and stretching out its long arms in the direction of the affrighted man. After a pause, however, came the sound of a slight whistle from the ground beyond the walls. The monkey suddenly disappeared, in such a manner that Perrinet himself could not see what means the active beast had taken to follow its master.

It was in vain that Perrinet strained his eyes to see whether he could distinguish the form of the boy on the plain, where rose the few scattered houses of the Faubourg St. Germain; the night was now too dim. Profiting by the state

of mortal terror by which the sentinel was still, probably, possessed, he dropped hurriedly back upon the little garden of his boyhood, entered the attic by the roof, regained his chamber, extinguished the lamp, and with a groan, and the stifled words "It is done! the first step is taken! there is no retreat!" flung himself upon his bed.

He long lay quiet, although sleep was far enough from his eyelids. At length he thought the time for action come; and he rose slowly. He fancied he heard a noise—but no, it was only the beating of his own heart. He then bent his head to listen on the floor—all was still below. His father slept, then. The deed of theft was now to be done—the keys of the gate to be taken. With stealthy steps, fearing every creaking of his shoes or of the floor—he gained the narrow staircase of his room—he held his very breath as he descended it—he reached the door, and pushed it gently open. Now he started; for the last three steps in the room creaked as he trod upon them successively. Again he held his breath more painfully. Now at last he stood upon the floor of the room below. He listened anxiously: a cold sweat bedewed his forehead; and he shuddered as he wiped it away. No sound seemed to

betray that the old man had heard him. He crossed the floor, then stealthily pushed still further the half-open door of the little cell that served as bedroom to his father beyond, with caution, and looked in.

On his rude pallet-bed, upon which he had thrown himself fully dressed, lay the old guardian of the gate: a lanthorn, for night use, stood upon the table, and cast its troubled light upon the face of the sleeping old man. Perrinet advanced on tiptoe into the room: fearful that the old man might open his eyes, and discover that another person was in the chamber, he was about to extinguish the light; but upon second thoughts he stayed his hand, lest in the obscurity he should stumble against any piece of furniture, and awaken the sleeper. Slowly he crept along to the bed-side, pausing at each step to allow the loose floor to rise without creaking beneath his foot-fall—his left hand on the wall, his right grasping a dagger given him by the Carmelite, with that involuntary gesture which was so habitual to him. The quick and irregular beatings of his heart, that throbbed to suffocation, contrasted with the calm respiration of the old man. All at once he started, as a harrowing thought crossed his mind; and he

snatched away from his dagger-hilt the hand that gave him the look of an assassin, and passed it over his brow with an almost audible groan. Then he again advanced slowly, slowly, to the bed, like a tiger-cat, never once removing his eyes from the sleeping face of old Leclerc. When he reached the bed's head he drew a long silent breath, paused for a moment, and then bent forward slowly; more slowly still he passed his hand, inch by inch, under the bolster, where he knew that the old guardian placed the keys when he slept, regardless of the pain which the forced cramped position of his body caused to run through all his limbs. At length he touched the cold iron of the keys, passed a finger through the ring that held them, and as slowly pulled them towards him—his eyes still ever fixed upon the sleeping face of the old man. He drew them forth, received them in his other hand, and grasped them carefully in order that their rattling might not be heard. He rose slowly from his cramped position, and again he drew a long silent breath. The keys were his.

At that moment of satisfaction, the cry of the sentinel from the city-walls, "Sentinels, watch! watch, guardians of the city!" was distinctly heard without. The old man turned uneasily

on his couch, as if half awakened by the distant noise ; his eyes opened lazily : but instead of closing them again, the old man stared before him, and then sprang up with a cry into a sitting position.

“ Who’s there ?” he exclaimed ; but the next moment he recognised the young man. “ Perrinet !—here ! What dost thou do here ? speak.”

“ My father, I—I thought I heard a noise—I feared you were ill,” stammered the young man, with the visible confusion of one unaccustomed to dissemble or to lie.

“ But thou art not undressed ; thou hast not been to bed,” pursued old Leclerc. “ What does this mean ? Answer—answer ! Why dost thou remain there, speechless and immovable ? Why look so haggard and so pale ? Thou deceivest me ! What wouldst thou do ? There is evil in thine eye.” Suddenly a thought struck the old man ; he passed his hand beneath the bolster. “ Ah ! Perrinet, thou hast my keys ! Thou hast stolen them whilst I slept, beneath my head. For what bad purpose ? My keys ! give me my keys ! give me them back, and I will not even ask thee what was the evil thought.” The old guardian, as he spoke, sprang to his feet and confronted the young man.

Perrinet started back beyond his reach. Dis-

simulation was now vain; he folded his arms before him.

“Yes, I own it; I have them,” he said. “But I must—I will keep them.”

“Give them back to me. I command thee, boy.”

“No, father, no,” cried Perrinet, resolutely: “I will not yield them. Hear me. I have been branded with disgrace—scourged, father,—scourged unjustly, infamously scourged, by order of the villain Armagnac. The living brand of shame is on my back—the moral brand is on my brow. The means are in my hands to avenge myself upon the tyrant, and I will not resign them.”

“Holy Mother of heaven, is it come to this?” exclaimed the old man, clasping his hands. “Scourged!—disgraced! But thou wouldst disgrace thyself still more, impetuous boy. If there be the brand of shame upon thy brow, thinkest thou that the name of thief—ay! thief—will wipe away the stain? Thinkest thou that the name of traitor will be a mark of honour? For now I divine all: thou wouldst deliver up the city to the enemies of Armagnac, to the Burgundian; and for this deed of treachery thou robbest thy old father of his keys—those keys he has guarded faithfully for more than five-and-twenty years. But those

keys are *my* honour, boy ; because thou supposest thy honour lost, wouldst thou rob thy father of his also ? Oh, the old man can bear his shame, thou thinkest : he has not many years to live under it. And if the shame hurry him to the grave a few years earlier, what matter ? what matter ? What matter, too, if the sorrow on the old man's heart be still more heavy than the shame upon his head ? What matter it to thee if he can never name again the name—never again look upon the face of one, whom he has fostered with true paternal love—one who was once his pride, his hope, his joy ?”

“ Father ! father ! ” was all that Perrinet could reply, in a deprecating tone, to the pathetic address of the old man, spoken in hurried and broken accents.

“ My keys, boy ! give them here. I ask thee not to kneel for pardon ; but go, repent of thy thoughts of evil in thy chamber. My keys—here—give them ! ” said old Leclerc, more resolutely.

“ No ! ” was Perrinet's answer.

“ With my life thou shalt never take them hence,” pursued the old man, sturdily. “ Ah ! thou handlest thy dagger's hilt already. Be it so ! with force, with the death of the old man only, shalt thou accomplish thy deed of treach-

ery. I will resist thee to the utmost, I tell thee, although unarmed. Give me the keys!—or thou must plunge thy dagger in my throat for their possession.”

“ Oh father! father!” cried Perrinet, almost kneeling at the old man’s feet, “ speak not thus. Leave me the keys, I do implore thee. Curse me—kill me afterwards, if thou wilt. But I have sworn an oath to do this deed; and I will do it.”

“ And have I not sworn an oath to do my duty to the death?” replied old Leclerc. “ Yes, I have sworn it; and like thee I will keep my oath. The keys!”

“ Hear me, father—” began Perrinet.

“ No! it is a struggle for life or death,” pursued the old guardian, wildly. “ Come, strike then for thy prize, boy. Here are no longer father and son, but the true man and the traitor. Strike, then, without remorse, at the old man’s grey hairs; for, hear the truth—by the holy saints, the truth!—I am *not* thy father!”

Perrinet started back as if he thought the old man had lost his senses.

At the same moment a violent blow was struck against the outer door.

“ Who is there? What does this mean, at this hour of the night?” said the old guardian, still trembling with agitation.

Another and more violent blow was struck without.

"This must be seen to," continued old Leclerc: he took up the lanthorn. "Perrinet,—Perrinet!" he said, with an accent of warning and reproach; but there was no time for more: the noise without continued; and there were cries for the guardian of the gate. He hurried into the outer room.

"Wilt thou betray me?" said Perrinet, hastily.

The old man groaned, but answered not a word. Before he opened the outer door, he demanded who knocked.

"An order from the Constable," was the reply.

The old guardian shook with the conflict of his various emotions. Spite of the scene that had just passed, a scene of opposition and violence, the old man really harboured feelings of the strongest parental affection towards Perrinet. Next to his own duty, his attachment to the youth whom he had nursed, brought up, and cherished, was the predominant sentiment in his bosom. Perhaps, had he really analyzed the feelings of his heart, he might have found that this attachment was in truth even superior to that sense of duty, for which he would just before have sacrificed his life under circumstances

so harrowing. He trembled, because he immediately connected the fate of his foster son with this new order from the Constable, received at such an unusual hour of the night.

"Fly, Perrinet—hide thyself!" he said, in a smothered tone, turning his head towards the smaller chamber, and hesitating to open the door; and then, aloud, he asked, "What order?"

"Open, I say," was answered from without, "I bear an order to search the house for a suspected Burgundian."

"Hear'st thou not? It is thee they seek," said the old man again in an agony of mind. "Thy plans are thwarted, seest thou: resistance would be useless: leave the keys and hide thyself above; I will keep them back as best I may. Go, go, my boy."

"Why do you not open, old dotard, and quickly too? Must we break the door down, old traitor?" was shouted without; and heavy blows were given to the door, as if the threat were about to be executed.

"I open, Messires, I open," cried the old guardian, fumbling as long as he could at the lock of the door; he still murmured lowly, "Hide thee, boy, hide thee!"

He dared not to look round; but he heard

the rattle of the heavy keys upon the table of the inner room, and then the step of Perrinet crossing the outer chamber and mounting the small staircase hurriedly. He opened the door at last. A strangely-dressed evil-looking man, with an eagle nose, and a pair of sharp black eyes, entered, followed by several archers of Armagnac's guard.

"You have kept us waiting long, old fellow," said Cleofas angrily, "but I might have guessed as much; ha! ha! We have hunted down the badger to his hole. Guard the entrance, and let no one pass."

"Whom do you seek?" said old Leclerc, standing before him. "There are no Burgundians here."

"That is to be seen," replied Cleofas with a sneer; "one traitor there is, I warrant me: and that one is your villain son, old man."

"I live alone," stammered old Leclerc evasively, "my son lives not here: and he is no—" he tried to utter the word "traitor," but he could not—"no villain," he added.

"He is a foul traitor and conspirator against Monseigneur the Constable," said Cleofas authoritatively. "I have orders to seize upon his person, alive or dead."

“ But not from the Constable ! *He* could not have given such an order,” cried old Leclerc with the utmost surprise.

“ From Monseigneur the Constable himself,” replied the spy.

The old guardian clasped his hands : he opposed a last effort of resistance.

“ But how am I assured that you are his true emissary ?” he said, “ I know you not.”

“ Look here, then ; and let that convince you,” responded Cleofas, producing a sealed parchment. “ This is an order to arrest your son, and capture him alive or dead. If he be dead it may save us a world of needless trouble afterwards.” The order was indeed from the hand of the Constable, but given at an hour prior to his interview with the Abbess of St. Magloire, and before he was even aware of the name of the criminal whose arrest he enjoined. “ Come, no more dallying ! A light hither ! The house must be searched.”

With trembling hands the old guardian lighted the hand-lamp at the wick of the night-lanthorn. His agitation did not escape the sharp eye of Cleofas. The lower rooms were searched in vain : and Cleofas mounted with some of the men to the upper story, while others of them

remained below, at the order of the spy, to guard the person of old Leclerc.

In the most violent state of agitation the old man listened to the tread of steps above, expecting every moment to hear the noise of the struggle that would announce the capture of his son: but after a pause, that seemed to him an eternity, he again heard the party descending the narrow stair.

“Not here!” exclaimed Cleofas angrily, stumbling down into the room. “Must that detested fellow ever escape me? But if the wolf-cub be not in the lair, *per Herculem*, he may return to it. There is still hope. And now, old fellow, there is still another charge to execute. You, Clement Leclerc, late *custos* of the gate of St. Germain, follow these men.”

“I!—for what purpose?” said the old man.

“The keys of the gate are taken from your keeping. They are not considered safe in such *custodia* as that of the father of a confirmed traitor,” replied Cleofas. “You are dispossessed, old man.”

“Impossible!” stammered old Leclerc; “I have been their guardian for more than five-

and-twenty years. This would be the bitterest affront to me."

"It is the order of the Constable. *Ite, lictores,*" commanded the quondam quack-doctor upon his own authority. "But, first, where are these same keys, that are to be committed to my keeping?"

"They are in the further room," said the old man, utterly cast down by this fresh announcement.

He took up the lanthorn, and entered the bed-room, followed by Cleofas. The keys lay upon the table, but the ring, that had held them, had been broken; and they were scattered about: the accustomed eye of the old man saw at once that two of the smaller ones were missing. His first impulse was to speak, and mention this fact: but he checked himself immediately.

"If I speak, I betray Perrinet," he reasoned to himself: "they will make more careful search: he will be found; and his death is certain. No! I cannot speak; I am no longer the responsible guardian of the gate; I am driven forth: God's will be done."

"They are there!" he said aloud.

"You keep them but ill, methinks—*malus custos,*" remarked Cleofas, gathering the keys together, and taking possession of them.

At a further order from the spy, old Leclerc was compelled to take his cap and follow the archers of the guard, his heart still bursting with a thousand conflicting feelings and agonizing apprehensions. Cleofas closed the door, returned to the bedroom, looked at the keys, and then sat down upon the bed, turning up his eyes, like one who listens and watches. But he heard, for some time, no sound, either above or without the house.

Perrinet, meanwhile, had retreated by the same way which he had employed to reach the city wall with Astaroth. The night was fully overcast when he again climbed to the summit; the wind blew in gusts; and the rain began to fall down over the city; the obscurity was far greater than before.

Without having time to reflect greatly upon the strange announcement made to him by the man whom he had always looked upon as his father, and, in fact, dismissing it from his mind as the expression of the old man's passion only, in a moment of such strong excitement, Perrinet crept up to the platform of the gateway. The sentinel now stood on the other side below. It was in vain the young armourer tried to distinguish any objects in the plain; the night was too dark. In vain, too, he listened for any

tread of footsteps beyond the walls; the roaring of the wind and the splashing of the rain prevented any sound from reaching him. He crouched down, and through his hollowed hands imitated the cry of a screech-owl. His heart beat thick as he heard the cry repeated from without the city. But this double cry seemed to have aroused the attention of the sentinel; for Perrinet heard him mounting the steps on the other side. Not a moment was to be lost. The young man darted forward, sprang upon the unwary sentinel, and seized him by the throat. The fellow had but time to utter one cry; and the powerful young armourer had hugged him in his arms and flung him over the wall into the moat below, where he heard him struggling in the water.

“Who goes there? What noise?” was cried by the nearest sentinel in the distance.

“All’s well! Sentinels watch!” cried Perrinet in answer; and the cry of “Sentinels watch!” was repeated from post to post, and died away as before.

The next moment Perrinet descended rapidly the flight of steps to the gate below. He hesitated no longer; the deed was about to be done. In another minute the deed *was* done. He unlocked the wicket of the great gates, and passed through. The fallen portcullis was before him.

“Burgundy!” he cried.

“And the red cross!” was the answer.

“You have an armed troop?” he asked.

“And I, Count Villiers de l’Isle-Adam, command them;” was replied.

Perrinet unlocked the fastenings of the portcullis. The huge spiked machine rushed upwards by its counter-weight; the entrance was free. Perrinet retreated into the city; and silently the Count de l’Isle-Adam followed; then his band of men—issuing like a huge dark serpent through the narrow entrance of the wicket. Astaroth, also, in another minute was by his master’s side; the boy could scarcely repress his wild fevered exultation of feeling.

The whole small body, that was to surprise so large a capital, was soon in the space before the gateway; but its leader knew that they had a large body of allies within, and that the great majority of the citizens were in their favour.

“To the Hôtel des Tournelles!” said the Count. “First let us take possession of the persons of the king and dauphin. You,” he said, addressing another officer, “with your men, to the Constable’s Hotel; make Armagnac a prisoner without delay.

“Armagnac! Armagnac!” cried Perrinet.

“No! that vengeance is mine own.” And he rushed hastily forwards like a madman.

The door of the guardian’s house at the same moment opened. The scared head of Cleofas appeared.

“Treason!” he shouted; and before he could be prevented, he ran up the lane along the walls.

All further concealment was now vain. Without attempting the pursuit of the spy, who gave the alarm, the Count de l’Isle-Adam cried, “On—on! Long live Burgundy! Burgundy and peace! Long live the king!” The whole troop rushed forward, shouting—“Burgundy and the red cross! Burgundy! Burgundy! Death to the Armagnacs!”

The streets were in immediate commotion as they passed: windows opened in all the houses: pale heads appeared: at the noise of the cries, many shouted also, “Long live Burgundy!” Then rushed armed men from the houses, and followed the troop in tumult. Scholars from the university swelled the train. But the alarm had been already given; and alarm bells began to ring loud upon the air, amidst the confusion, far and wide throughout the city.

CHAPTER X.

THE TRAITOR.

What thousand voices pass through all the rooms !

What cries and hurries ! hark !

In every room confusion.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

Stand back, thou manifest conspirator.

SHAKSPEARE.

ODETTE stood in the light of the hanging lamp of her chamber, like a pale spectre, by her bedside, her white dress having been hastily thrown about her, her fair hair streaming in golden torrent around her. She stood with one hand holding to the dark curtains of her bed, with the other keeping back her thick tresses, alarmed, listening to the unusual sounds of tumult far and near, and of the distant shouts, and tolling bells, that met her ear. Her chamber looked out upon the gardens of the Hôtel des Tournelles ; but the tumult that rang upon the air from the street was very audible. Some great calamity had evidently fallen upon the city : a murmured prayer for the welfare of the poor king was sent by her to heaven ; and then a prayer for another, whom she dared not

to name even to herself, escaped from her bosom in one half-stifled sigh. Presently the noise of the tumult came nearer; then it seemed to be already in the interior of the palace. She suddenly resumed her force and the pure moral courage that sustained her under all circumstances; for the thought of danger to the king's person crossed her; and she determined to fly to his side. At the same moment the door burst open; and a man rushed into the room.

It was the dauphin.

His dress was disordered, as he had been hastily roused from his bed; his neck was open; his bright hair also streamed upon his shoulders. At that moment there was a likeness between those two fair beings.

"Monseigneur!" cried Odette, advancing unfearingly towards him, all feelings of constraint or etiquette forgotten in the agitation of the moment, "what has happened? what means this tumult? how fares our lord the king?"

"The city has been surprised by the Burgundians!" replied the prince hurriedly; "treachery—the foulest treachery has been at work. The palace is already in the power of the Burgundian troop."

"The king—the king?" cried Odette.

“A prisoner!” was the reply.

“And you are here, my prince! you fly not to his rescue!” cried the terrified girl.

“In vain!” exclaimed the dauphin; “the galleries are filled with the Burgundians. They seek myself. My friends, my companions—those in whom I trusted—Babolin, to whom I have shown such favour—all have deserted me: they would not, the base cowards, strike a blow in my defence. I am alone—nearly unarmed—would I not yield, there is no hope but in flight. But without thee—without thee, Lys d’Ange, my angel-flower, I cannot, will not fly. Come! come! quickly. I will save thee from their rude hands. With thee, bright angel, in my arms, I will bid them defiance, reach the nearest stronghold, raise an army, rescue my king. Without thy beaming presence I am powerless! I am lost! Come! come!” and he endeavoured to encircle her in his arms.

“No, no,” cried Odette, disengaging herself; “my holy duty binds me here. Be Charles the king a prisoner, and miserable?—he needs me all the more. And were it not so—never, never, flight with you, my prince. Did even death stare me in the face from rude Burgundian hands—never, never—no, not dishonour—not dishonour!”

“Trifle not, Odette,” exclaimed the dauphin, “my fate, the fate of France, depends on thee. Without thee I will not fly. If thou refusest, I surrender, and France is in the hands of Burgundy—of Burgundy, the friend of England. If thou refusest, France is lost!”

“Such words are the words of insensate passion, prince,” replied Odette; “the fate of France depends on you; and you would fling away its last hopes of salvation for a poor worm like me, or use them only at the price of a poor maiden’s honour. Oh shame! shame and dishonour!”

“My last dream, then, is gone!” cried the passionate prince, unheeding her; “thou didst not love me!”

“Not love thee!” sobbed Odette; “Would that I had never seen thee! Would that my heart had never beat!” Then, as if first aware of the confession she had made, Odette uttered a cry, and covered her face with her hands.

“She loves me! she loves me!” exclaimed the dauphin; “now, more than ever, am I resolved; with thee, love, life, liberty, glory, and battle for the weal of France—or with thee captivity, humiliation, shame. It is for thee to decide—it is for thee to make or mar me!”

Choose! Now wilt thou fly with me?" Again he endeavoured to clasp her in his arms.

But Odette tore herself away with the cry, "Cruel and insensate!" and flinging herself down before her kneeling-chair, she sobbed forth, "Oh! Holy Virgin! aid me! leave me not in such a strait, and turn his heart!"

At this juncture both Odette and the dauphin started at the noise of heavy footsteps; the next moment Tanneguy Duchâtel hurried into the room.

"Ah! one friend remains to me!" exclaimed the dauphin; "Tanneguy, I did thee wrong. Thou art not of the vile race who fly from their friends in the hour of need."

"I seek you, my prince," exclaimed the sturdy warrior; "I hoped, yet hoped not, to have found you here at such a moment. But vain words were now ill employed. Resistance is worse than useless. We must fly to the Bastile, and there hold out."

"I come: but not without the loadstone of my life," answered the dauphin. "With her I fly: without her, no!"

Tanneguy Duchâtel cast a look at Odette, who held up her hands to him imploringly.

"Oh! save him! take him hence!" she cried.

“ My prince,” exclaimed Tanneguy kneeling, “ in you, I see before me the last prop of the ancient monarchy of France. My duty to my king and country bids me save you—save you by force—ay ! by force, if you come not willingly. Oh ! resist not my prayers—set aside all boyish passion—think on your country’s weal—on your own duty, Charles, dauphin of France.”

“ By force !” exclaimed the young prince, angrily.

“ By force, Monseigneur,” said Tanneguy rising.

“ Traitor !” cried again the dauphin.

“ No—I am true to you, my prince, when no longer you are true to yourself,” replied Duchâtel. “ There is no time to be lost—” And he advanced upon the young prince.

“ Touch me not,” cried young Charles. “ I go, Odette, I go ; but to return and claim thy love—thy love which thou hast avowed.”

“ By the gardens—they are yet free,” exclaimed Tanneguy. “ The issue at their further extremity touches on the Bastile.”

“ This key ! it opens the turret door !” said Odette, as if with a sudden inspiration. “ Heaven grants that it comes to good purpose.” And she took up the key of the turret-stair, which

the dauphin had flung down on the table in the morning.

“Odette—farewell—but not for long,” exclaimed the prince.

Odette could not proffer a word.

Tanneguy Duchâtel took the key, and hurried the dauphin from the chamber. Odette followed them to the balcony. She heard them descend the stairs, open the door below; then she faintly saw their retreating forms hastening across the park. She clasped her hands tightly before her; and a convulsive sigh burst from her bosom.

“My king, my king,” she cried at last, “could I forget thee for a moment?” And she hurried back to her room; there was a noise of rushing men in the gallery: lifting the tapestry, she darted through a small side door, which led towards the king’s apartment.

The next moment her pure, almost saintly, chamber was filled with a rude crowd of Burgundian men-at-arms in search of the dauphin. Everything was overthrown; the adjoining landing-place, the oratory, the staircase, were searched in vain. Duchâtel had locked the turret door behind him. The bed was searched—the hangings—the tapestry, amidst coarse jokes and noisy laughter.

In the midst of this scene of confusion a young man rushed into the room.

“Odette! Odette!” he cried. But a moment’s glance told Perrinet that his beloved was not there. His questions were only met by mockery and derision. At length, an officer in command told him what had passed in the palace,—that the king had been taken into safe keeping, but that the dauphin, on whom it was the purpose of the Burgundians to lay hands, in order to constrain his will, was nowhere to be found. A pang of cruel agony shot through Perrinet’s heart, at the thought that Odette was perhaps the companion of the dauphin’s flight. His bitterness found vent in curses on the head of Armagnac.

“Know you aught of the Constable?” asked the officer.

“I seek him everywhere,” replied Perrinet. “His hotel was invested—the gates forced—myself, I was the first to enter; but he was nowhere to be found. He had escaped, or had not returned home this night. But I will find him, be he hid in hell. I seek him in the palace now. Where is the king? The villain Constable has fled thither, perchance. In the king’s presence I may find him. Death to Armagnac!”

The infuriated young man, whose fevered and over-excited state of mind amounted now almost to insanity, again rushed away. The palace was filled with tumultuous bands of men—Burgundians, citizens, and students, who had joined the invading throng. Through antechambers, and large half-dismantled rooms, Perrinet at length reached a chamber which was nearly filled with a motley crowd. Torches, as well as the lamp from above, illumined the scene within. Near the fire-place was a group of soldiery; and seated in a high arm-chair in the midst was an aged-looking man, with haggard and bewildered look. Perrinet knew him to be the king. By his side stood the Count Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, his head bared, and his gesture one of respect, while with his sword he motioned to the crowd to keep back. The Constable was not there; but by the king's side there was another being who, for the moment, absorbed all the faculties of the young armourer. It was Odette. She knelt on the opposite side of the king's chair to Isle-Adam, and held the hand of the monarch, upon which she had buried her face.

"Will it please Monseigneur the King, then," said Isle-Adam, as Perrinet thrust his way through the crowd, "to accompany me to

the Châtelet. It is necessary for you, Sire, to give your royal sanction to the removal of Bernard, Count Armagnac, from his high command as Constable, and the appointment of my master, the Duke of Burgundy, as Lieutenant General and Protector of the realm."

"I am your prisoner, Count," said the king, with dejection, although not without dignity. "It is yours to command your captive king."

"Not so, Sire," replied the Count. "Far be it from me to treat the monarch of France as prisoner. I would suggest only to Monseigneur the King that it is necessary to give his sanction to a state of things now rendered unavoidable, since the tyranny of Armagnac has fallen, and the city is in the hands of the Burgundians."

"That is, Sir Count, in other words," replied Charles, "that you do me the mockery of allegiance, whilst you constrain my royal person."

"My liege, it is not constraint I would impose—" began Isle-Adam again.

"Cease this scene of humiliating irony," interrupted the king. "No more of it, I command you, if still, as you say, I be your king. What was it that you said? my poor brain again wanders sadly—ay! so it was. To the Châtelet—to a state prison, you would lead me."

“In order that your royal person may be more secure than in this palace, invaded by an angry mob,” broke in the Count.

“My person more secure!” exclaimed Charles, half rising from his chair. “Secure! yes, secure that ye may work, unhindered, your plans of bloodshed and treachery. Why should my person need security? My people love me—ay! they love their poor old king. They are honest-hearted, they. There is not one would harm me, were I alone and unarmed among them. No, no, my people would protect me. No more, I say. I am your prisoner; and I must even do your bidding. Since my person must be secure, we will follow to the Châtelet. Lead on, Sir Count.”

The king arose from his chair with dignity: for a moment only he seemed to sink his head in despair; and then he murmured lowly to himself—“Isabel! Isabel! I see thy hand in this. False! false! and treacherous ever!” When he again raised his head, he looked wild and agitated, as if the scene, which had passed before him, had already begun once more to break an intellect scarcely yet sufficiently strengthened from its long state of utter weakness. Odette, who looked up as the king rose, gazed upon that agitated face with anguish.

Guillaume d'Hersilly, who had also found his way into his royal master's chamber, stretched out an imploring hand to Isle-Adam to beg him to forbear all further constraint upon the king. The Count shook his head mournfully.

"Did I not say to lead on, Messire?" said the king, imperatively. "To the Châtelet, then, if you will have it so."

"They will not separate *me* from you, surely, my lord and king?" said Odette, with anguish.

"I am no longer thy lord and king, my child," replied Charles. "Address thyself not to me. And yet—they would not, surely, have the utter cruelty to deprive an old man of his last prop of life."

After a few words with the physician, the Count de l'Isle-Adam declared that he saw no reason why the king should not choose such attendants as he pleased about his person, provided they were not adherents of the Constable.

"Hark thee, my child," said the king to Odette, with a smile of irony; "my masters deign to treat me kindly!"

Isle-Adam would have again deprecated these expressions from the king, but Charles once more interrupted him. All at once a thought struck the bewildered brain of the monarch.

“Where is the dauphin?” he exclaimed suddenly. “Where is my Charles? Why is he not here? You have done him some harm, traitors—you have done him some harm. Where is my boy, I say?”

Isle-Adam looked around; but the only answer that he could obtain from those about him was, that the dauphin was nowhere to be found.

“Escaped!” whispered Odette to the king, meanwhile—“with the brave Tanneguy Duchâtel, to the Bastile!”

The unhappy monarch raised his eyes to heaven; and then pressing Odette’s hand, murmured, “All is not lost to France! my boy! my boy!”

“Now, then, Messire; I am at your will,” said the king, aloud.

As the king advanced, with Odette by his side, Perrinet, who had been a mute and stricken spectator of this short scene, found means to approach the fair girl.

“This must not be, Odette,” he said to her. “All is changed now. It is not for thee to remain where thy attendance is in vain. Come, let me take thee hence.”

“Perrinet,” she cried, with a start, “What

wouldst thou counsel? Leave my king! not with my life, as long as he has breath, and wills that I should abide by him!"

"This is madness!" resumed the young man eagerly. "Come!"

"Away!" said Odette, firmly; "thou art no man, to counsel this!"

The Count de l'Isle-Adam turned to see what stopped their progress.

"Ah! our brave young armourer!" he said, as he became aware of Perrinet's presence. "What know you of the Constable?"

"He has escaped as yet," replied Perrinet in a sulky tone, mortified at being recognised and addressed at such a moment.

"But he shall not slip our grasp, believe me," said the Count. "I attend you, Sire."

Odette looked from one to the other of the speakers in this short dialogue. She grew deadly pale: and, with one thought predominant in her mind, and overpowering all other considerations, she stood before Isle-Adam, erect and with distended eyeballs.

"Know you that man, Sir Count?" she gasped forth, pointing to Perrinet.

"I know him, and honour him," replied Isle-Adam. "It was he who has this night done

good service to Burgundy and the true cause of France."

"Service—to Burgundy!" stammered Odette.

"It was he who so boldly opened to us the gate of St. Germain."

The head of Odette suddenly fell; she appeared near fainting.

"My child, my poor child! Odette, what ails thee?" exclaimed Charles, endeavouring to support her—he who himself needed support.

But Odette again rallied with an effort: her face was still paler than before; she could not speak; but, turning away her head from the side on which Perrinet stood, she endeavoured to smile upon the king, as if to intimate that she was ready to accompany him.

"Odette! Odette!" cried Perrinet, now rushing to her side and endeavouring to grasp her arm.

But Odette removed her arm with such a look of scorn as her mild countenance was able to express.

"Perrinet—the traitor! Perrinet!" she murmured in the tone of the bitterest reproach.

"Hear me," stammered her lover.

"It is not for such as me to curse, as it is not for such as me to bless," said Odette, with some

firmness. "That can alone Heaven and our Holy Church. And grant, all ye saints above, that the curse of Heaven, as the curse of our unhappy France, fall not on the head of the traitor to his country and his king."

Perrinet's efforts to speak were in vain. The unhappy girl clung to the side of the king, as if to shelter herself under his protection from the touch of the traitor. Charles passed his trembling arm around her; and they thus moved on from the apartment.

For a time Perrinet remained with his head bowed, as if beneath the heavy weight of the words of her he loved. A storm of confused and passionate feeling was passing within him. The desire of revenge, still burning in his heart, for the personal injuries he had sustained, mingled strangely with the feelings of remorse which the reproaches of Odette had caused to rise in his bosom. To gain possession of Odette, he had first harboured the thought of treachery: the deed of treachery was accomplished—he had lost honour, peace of mind, and the esteem of good men—all for the sake of her who now turned away her face from him with scorn. At length he started from a state which appeared to him more like a painful dream than a reality.

He smote his forehead, and then rushed through the still crowded corridors of the palace, with the look and gesture of a madman. But in that hour of tumult and excess none regarded his violence. In the court of the Hôtel des Tournelles, where torches were flashing around, he found Astaroth, whose eyes gleamed with the ferocity of a young tiger, in the midst of the uproar and confusion. The boy followed Perrinet, who no longer seemed to know which way to bend his steps, into the street; the young armourer staggered like a drunken man.

The street was the scene of frightful disorder. Torches were flared hither and thither. People ran distractedly about — women and children flying they knew not why or whither. Armed men in bands rushed past in a frightful picture that was confused like a hideous dream. The cries ran along the air, “Death to the Armagnacs! death to the Armagnacs! kill! kill them all!” From the distance came the strong light of burning houses that had been set on fire. The air was thick with smoke. An old priest rushed past the spot where Perrinet for a moment stood to collect his confused thoughts. A band of men pursued him: they caught him and tore him down to the ground. “Cry Bur-

gundy, and death to the Armagnacs, thou traitor!" said a ruffian. The old man spoke not. A blow was dealt upon his head; and then swords and knives stabbed him as he lay. Perrinet's soul sickened, and his brain reeled: and yet he too screamed "Death to Armagnac!" Crash after crash sounded around him: doors of houses in the street near the palace, supposed to conceal suspected Armagnacs, were being forced open: and from within came shrieks, and cries for help, and groans; and men, women, and children were thrown pell-mell from upper windows. The heavy night air rang with the cries, and was already sickened with the smell of blood.

"Death to the Armagnac! death to his spy!" cried Astaroth, grasping the hand of his master, whose senses seemed to leave him utterly in this scene of savage tumult.

"Death to the Armagnac!" shouted Perrinet in turn, scarce knowing what he shouted. "Where—where is he? all I possess, to him who will tell me where is the Constable!" he cried again.

As Perrinet rushed forward blindly, his arm was suddenly seized by the kloarek, who was on his way to the Hôtel des Tournelles.

"The saints be praised!" cried Yvon in a

state of the utmost disorder. "It is thou, Perrinet. Where is Odette? Lys d'Ange—what has become of her? You came from the palace."

"With the king—gone to the Châtelet," responded Perrinet.

"No harm has reached her?" asked the kloarek eagerly.

"None."

"Powers of heaven! what a night of horrors! what a dream of blood!" gasped forth Yvon. "Who can have done this? Who can have been the traitor?"

"The traitor! who speaks of the traitor?" said Perrinet wildly. "The traitor—the traitor—am I." And he laughed distractedly.

"Thou, Perrinet, thou!" exclaimed Yvon; and he started back from his friend.

"Thou too—thou scornest me!" cried Perrinet bitterly. "But the deed is done. Scorn me—scorn me—as she has scorned me. Go leave me—curse me. What matter now? Now I live but for revenge. Death to the Armagnac!"

"Yes, death to the Armagnac! death to his spy! Come, master, come!" shouted the boy Astaroth.

"Even if thou hast really done the deed of treachery," said Yvon, "stay at least thy hand

from bloodshed, Perrinet. Mingle not in this scene of slaughter. Perrinet! my friend—mercy for thy fellow-creatures — mercy for thyself!”

Above the clatter of the bells and the shouts and screams upon the ear, came the toll of midnight from the palace turret.

The day was gone—a second day of crime, and misery, and tyranny, and treachery and revenge, in that distracted city. Paris was surrendered to new masters, still more remorseless than the former.

The day was gone: and Perrinet stood once more between his two influences of good and evil. But he hesitated not now, in his frenzy: he tore away his arm from Yvon, and rushed on.

END OF VOL. II.





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